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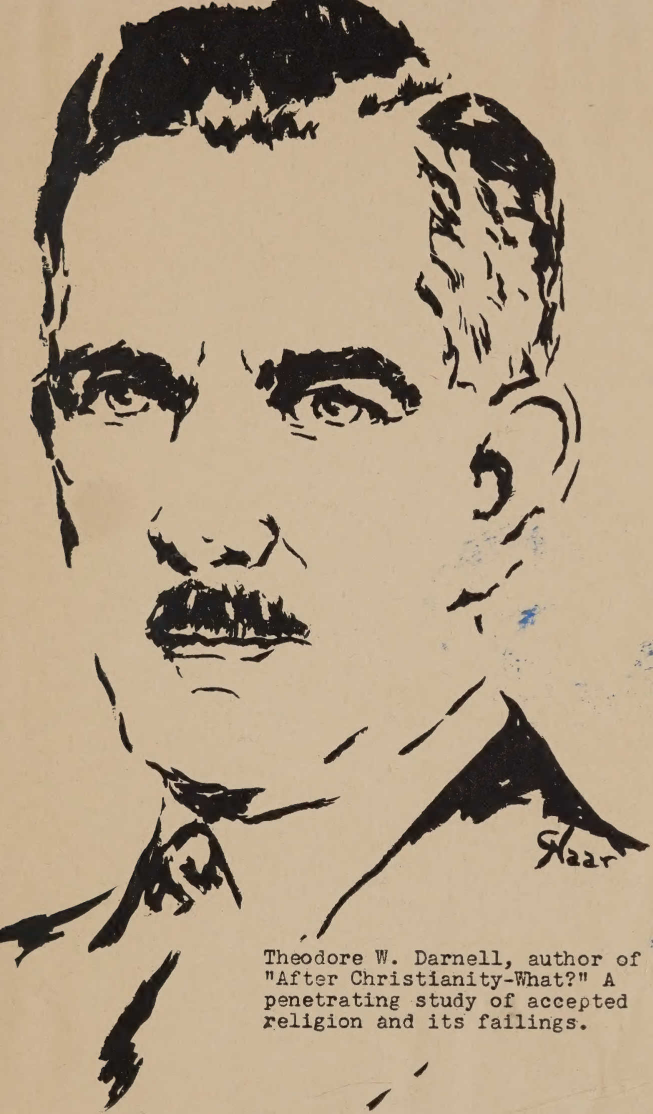

Theodore W. Darnell, author of "After Christianity-What?" A penetrating study of accepted religion and its failings.

# AFTER CHRISTIANITY—WHAT?

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# AFTER CHRISTIANITY—WHAT?

THEODORE W. DARNELL

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# *Introduction*

FOR several very significant and cogent reasons Mr. Darnell's book fills a greater need in the religious field than any other book published in America in a generation.

Most liberal and intelligent books which appear on the subject of religion today are attacks or critical appraisals. To have shown the inadequacies, anachronisms and illogicalities of conventional supernatural religion was an important contribution to human enlightenment. It was something which needed to be done. It was an indispensable step in the emancipation of the human intellect. But this responsibility has now been met. A number of books published in the last decade have completely pulverised both orthodox religion and devout modernism. There is nothing in particular to be gained by further prodding of corpses.

Most of the books which have attacked traditional religion have taken it for granted that we no longer need any kind of religion. They rule out a secular and rational humanism along with fundamentalism. In the process of exposing the superstitions and shams of orthodoxy and the evasive rationalizations of modernism they also reject those forms of religious reconstruction which frankly accept modern knowledge and proceed therefrom with relentless logic to build up their new system. In short, in the majority of critical assaults on religion the baby goes out with the bath.

By far the larger part of the books which take a constructive rather than a critical attitude towards religion reveal a notable reluctance or a palpable failure to grapple resolutely with the relevant facts in the picture and to accord respect to the logic of the situation. There is a lamentable tendency merely to rationalize the older dogmas and phraseology. The premises of orthodoxy are abandoned, but the conclusions and procedure of the older faith are resolutely treasured. It is at best only new wine in the old bottles — and most of the new wine is of a synthetic bootleg variety.

In particular, these devout modernists assume that all we need to do to fashion a religion adequate for the future needs of humanity is to revive and apply the literal teachings of Jesus. They admit that historical Christianity, as believed and practised in the Catholic and orthodox Protestant churches, is done for. It cannot square with history, logic or scholarship and its social program is wrong-headed and woefully weak. But the teachings of Jesus are as suitable and adequate for the needs of 1930 as they were for the civilization of 100 A.D.

Modernistic rationalizations of this sort are in no sense what we most need today in the field of constructive writing on religion. In many ways the modernists are in a more desperate plight than the fundamentalists. The latter have at least logic to their credit. Once one grants their premises — which, of course, modern scholarship totally undermines — their conclusions flow naturally and logically from their initial assumptions.

The modernists, by rejecting the premises of the fundamentalists and then clinging to fundamentalist conclusions and practices, can summon neither facts nor logic to their defense. And probably the weakest point in their whole position is their contention that the uncertain, fragmentary and often contradictory teachings of an obscure and unlettered Palestinian agitator who may have lived some two thousand years ago can serve as the basis for a live and pulsating religion which will meet the needs of an urban and industrial civilization in our twentieth century.

Mr. Darnell's book possesses a value not to be found in any of the types of religious literature we have been describing above. He does not waste time trying to stir the dead bones of orthodoxy and he does not fall into the mental confusion and foggy logic of the modernists. He takes the end of supernatural religion for granted. He wastes no effort disposing of such things as the biblical theory of creation, the doctrine of the direct divine revelation of holy scriptures, the dogma of the divinity of Jesus and the like.

Nor does Mr. Darnell reason that because orthodox Christianity is done for we have no need for any type of religion. He recognizes that man is a creature of emotion as well as of coldly rational intellect. Therefore, we cannot rely entirely upon the inculcation of saving scientific knowledge to exercise the function of social control in modern life. We need the dynamic and synthesizing influence of a rational and secular religion, which will stimulate men to do those things which science and æsthetics tell them should be done to increase individual happiness and hasten social progress.

Mr. Darnell escapes remarkably well from the pitfalls of modernism. He recognizes that one cannot have his cake and eat it too. He understands that one cannot reject the Old Testament and then read and preach from it with the fervor of a Jonathan Edwards. He sees that one cannot hold that Jesus was a mere man, like unto the rest of us, and then deduce conclusions about his teachings which are compatible only with a view of Jesus as the very Son of God. He perceives clearly that if Jesus was a man his teachings were limited by their human background. No man — least of all an uninformed man — of 30 A.D. could possibly tell us much of value for 1930.

But the outstanding reason for the very unusual significance and sterling contribution of Mr. Darnell's book is that he devotes himself almost exclusively to a consideration of the religion of the future. His book is true to its title. He starts with the assumption that the day of Christianity is done — its end is merely a question of the potency of intellectual inertia and the tenacity of superstition.

He then proceeds to investigate what manner of religion can be constructed which will harmonize with our contemporary perspective and to consider how it can be practically applied in our new age.

This is not only the job which was crying for execution. It is decidedly the hardest task which can be tackled by a writer on religion today. It is easy enough to demolish Christianity and Judaism. All that is needed for that task is adequate historical and critical information, respect for logical thinking, industry in compilation and ingenuity in exposition. Supernaturalism, whether it be of the vintage of Bryan or of Fosdick and Wieman, is an easy prey to the logical scholar and fearless controversialist.

The really difficult and baffling undertaking is that of formulating a body of religious beliefs and practices which will on the one hand square with scientific knowledge and will on the other make a sufficient popular appeal to the public to become a practical success. A religion which converted only the readers of the *New Republic, Nation* and *New Freeman* would not make much of a dent on contemporary America.

Mr. Darnell has real courage in blocking out this program for himself and he goes at it resolutely. There is no compromising with the past. There is no weakening in logical reasoning. It is a book to inspire the future generations of men, not one to comfort the wabblers of our age who can neither reject the old nor accept the new in whole-hearted fashion. He is a leader, not a tear-dryer.

Nor does the author rest content with vague generalizations of a purely theoretical import. He recognizes that if the new religion is to be a success it must come to grips with the practical issues of daily life in the twentieth century. Therefore, he shows how his religion would function in dealing with contemporary business, political institutions, social life, domestic institutions, education and the fine arts.

Religion comes down out of the air and relates itself to the real business of living. Mr. Darnell's religion is thoroughly secular. It is a religion which will guide and assist living here and now. It must justify itself by the results produced among men right here on this earth. It cannot draw a blank check on any hypothetical life to come.

Mr. Darnell clearly discerns that if we are to have a new religion which involves revolutionary changes in doctrine, goals and procedure we must expect corresponding changes in the practical machinery of religious endeavor. So he subjects the church — the vehicle of working Christianity — to calm and relentless scrutiny. He finds that we must contemplate as sweeping changes here in the methods of religious enterprise as will be necessary in the reformulation of religious belief. Religion will no longer be carried on solely in ecclesiastical edifices manned by an exclusive personnel withdrawn in part from the rough-and-tumble of daily life. In the future he who ministers to humanity will be a minister of religion, even though the new religion may require in addition some form of systematic organization and professionalized personnel.

No one need contend that Mr. Darnell has given us the last word on the religion of the future. If he had he would be greater than Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Confucius, Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Kant or Comte — indeed greater than all of them rolled into one. No religious leader of the past has ever faced so difficult a problem as that of constructing a religion which can operate in a sceptical intellectual atmosphere and control the life ideals of a buzzing, confused mechanical age. A religion for fishermen is quite a different thing from a religion which will bring right living to Chicago in 1930.

But we may safely assert that Mr. Darnell's book is a harbinger of the kind of writing which we must have in the field of religious reconstruction if religion is not to perish from the scene in western civilization. If such conceptions and aspirations as he envisages here do not grip the human imagination, then the race must face the prospect of existing without religious inspiration and guidance at no distant time in the future. That it can safely do so is possible, but many who have no faith in orthodoxy or modernism will hesitate to take the chance.

HARRY ELMER BARNES

NEW YORK CITY,
June 15, 1930.

# I

# *MODERN MAN'S SEARCH FOR RELIGION*

## *1. The Religion Which We Have*

IN the field of religious thought the average prewar American was both ignorant and bigoted. Notwithstanding that religion was given more attention in America than in any other country in the world, the adult in America probably knew as little of the subject as the school boy in Europe. He divided religion into two branches: Christianity and heathenism. Christianity was the religion of the civilized nations, non-Christian nations were heathen, and heathen people were savages who threw little girls into angry rivers, buried women alive in the graves of their dead husbands, and performed other horrible acts in worship of the hideous idols with which their lands were crowded. This interesting geographical information was derived from "returned missionaries" who, in the native costumes peculiar to their fields, preached to large audiences and incidentally gathered in money for the missionary cause. Loyal members of the church gladly contributed to this cause, for they had the double satisfaction of sending the benefits of Christian civilization to the " poor heathen " and, at the same time, " laying up treasures in heaven " for themselves. American Christians have never seriously objected to laying up treasure whether on earth or in heaven, nor did they doubt that the civilization which they were enjoying was directly and solely attributable to Christianity. Being favorably disposed to both of these enterprizes, they were easily persuaded by the emotional appeals of the missionary.

Christianity was accepted as the only divinely inspired religion. All others sprang from the devil. The Bible was written (in English) by the hand of God and, therefore, contained neither error nor contradiction. The American's trust in God was simple and whole-hearted. God took care of his own people, and surely Americans were his own people. He gave them prosperity. He protected them from peril. If they suffered it was because God, in his wisdom and love, was testing their faith. And no matter how great their burdens in this life might be they would ultimately be received into heaven where they would sit on the right hand of God throughout eternity. Heaven was as real as New York, and all who obeyed the law of the land, remained loyal to the Constitution, were true to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and voted the Republican ticket (the Democratic ticket in the South) were assured a mansion in the skies.

The World War disturbed this naïve trust. It broke down the customary provincialism of the American mind. In 1917–18 more than a million young men and women discovered Europe. They learned many things, among them that it is not wrong to play on the Sabbath day. They came back to America with an entirely different code of morals from that to which they had been accustomed. The new ideas shocked their elders. These older ones who had not gone over seas but had fed their imaginations on the propaganda which poured from the press, blamed German philosophy for debasing their children, and immediately set before themselves the task of reclaiming their " lost " sons and daughters to Christianity.

So much for the average man. Something else was happening to the educated men and women of America. Even before the war they had been suspicious that Christianity had its faults, and when the war broke out they at once became conscious that Christianity had proved itself too weak to cope with a problem of such great proportions. During the conflict they said very little of their growing suspicions of Christianity's failure, but they knew that a new age was opening before their eyes. After the war-clouds had lifted they began to set before themselves the task of making a thorough examination of the nature of this institution which they had accepted for so long a time as a matter of course.

At the conclusion of the war, then, we find two classes of men in America facing two utterly different tasks. The larger of these classes was eager to " get back to normalcy." The war had disturbed their religious peace and they looked upon the pre-war days as a golden age to be recovered as quickly as possible. The fact that life would never be quite the same as it had been before the war did not occur to them. They were unable to see the meaning of the war. They saw it merely as another military adventure. That it was also and more especially an intellectual adventure was not disclosed to them. America had grown up. It had begun to put away childish things. Its citizens were no longer provincial. They had become citizens of the world. Among the first institutions upon which they turned a critical eye was Christianity. The awakening mind of America began to ask "What is Christianity?" And with a curiosity which was natively strong but which had been beaten into subjection by the repeated threats of eternal punishment, the awakened minority began to read history through their own eyes. The following outline is what they found.

During the first half century after the death of Jesus of Nazareth, Christianity was in an unorganized state. It was divided into two groups. The first of these thought of itself as purely Jewish, and no attempt was made to make converts of others than Jews. The old Jewish laws and rites were scrupulously adhered to and the ceremony of circumcision, the preëminent symbol of Judaism, was the only door through which non-Jewish people might gain admission to the group. That is, those who wished to become Christians must first become Jews. The Christians held their meetings, for the most part, in the synagogues and were unmolested because unnoticed. They aspired to nothing but the ? purification of the Jewish religion. They strenuously objected to the "letter of the law" policy which had grown up within Judaism. They opposed the "religiosity" of the Pharisees and the culture of the Saducees. They wanted freedom of worship within the limits of the ancient faith of the Prophets. They held almost exactly the same relation to the Jewish religion as that which the early Puritans sustained to the Established Church of England in the closing period of the sixteenth century.

The second of these groups had different aspirations. It conceived of itself as a *new* religion, discarding the old Jewish rites and ceremonies. It was missionary in its attitude, welcoming all peoples, whether Jew or Gentile, to its fellowship. It frankly abandoned circumcision and required only the acceptance of the "lordship of the risen Christ" as a condition to membership. Under the leadership of its chief spirit, Paul of Tarsus, it formulated a doctrinal system for the guidance of its adherents, and these doctrines, accepted voluntarily at first because of the affection in which their author was held, very soon became obligatory upon all who espoused the new religion. It tried to escape the stigma of association with the many Jewish sects which were to be found in every part of the Roman empire and which were despised by the "respectable people" of the day; but here it failed. The fact that it was associated with these sects, that it refused to worship the Roman emperor, and that it declined to bear arms in the Roman legions, brought down upon it the hostility of the Roman gentry who regarded the new sect in much the same manner as that in which 100 per cent Americans looked upon conscientious objectors during the war. To escape this hostility the Christians held their meetings in the catacombs and other obscure places, always subjected to interruptions by the Roman soldiers and not infrequently made the objects of outrageous brutality. During these first years, therefore, Christianity had a precarious existence. Its followers were prominent chiefly for the part they played as victims in the public games where they furnished much sport for fashionable ladies and gentlemen who took great pleasure in the gory spectacle presented by the Roman arena. These people were an inoffensive, uneducated ? group of people who indeed might have escaped notice altogether had it not been for the custom of public games.

The first of these groups is little heard of in history. It left no permanent impress upon the life of mankind. It cannot in any true sense be called a part of Christianity. According to some historians it was ultimately swallowed up in Mohammedanism in the seventh century. Christianity was the result of the gradual expansion of the second group.

Three centuries passed by — centuries of disputation, of organization, of elaboration — and at last Christianity rose in triumph over all competing religions. In 325 A.D. Constantine gave the new religion his imperial approval and Christianity became "respectable." Pilate, for reasons of expediency, had allowed Jesus to go to the cross; Constantine, for similar reasons, allowed the religion which bore the name of the martyred teacher to become the official religion of the Roman Empire. Christianity no longer held its meetings in obscure places. It substituted the cathedrals for the catacombs and welcomed an emperor to its sacraments. Its bishops and priests became noblemen. The title, "King of kings," which Jesus had refused was taken by the head of Christianity who, instead of a crown of thorns, wore a crown of jewels and gold, and instead of having no place where to lay his head, possessed the noblest palace in Europe.

From that day to this very few changes have occurred in Christianity. The Roman branch has added a few dogmas such as that of the Immaculate Conception, celibacy of the priesthood, and the infallibility of the Pope, and Protestantism has substituted the infallibility of a book for that of a pope, and "justification by faith" for priestly absolution; but the doctrines of Christianity are today substantially what they were at the end of the fourth century. For more than fifteen centuries Christianity has clung to the doctrines acceptable to those who met at Nicea, and these doctrines may be heard today in every Christian church in America. Young men, just graduated from our universities where the modern scientific spirit compels them to recognize change as the law of human relationships as well as the law of the universe, are required to take a vow to believe and defend doctrines which have not changed in fifteen centuries.

What is this system of belief which has remained unchanged among all the changes of the last hundreds of years? It is primarily a religion of redemption. One of its exponents, Dr. Charles Fisher, writes:

> "Christianity has been properly called a religion of redemption. Here lies its peculiarity. It is the approach

of heaven to men, the love of God taking hold of men to lift them to higher fellowships."

Holding to an infallible book which was formed by adding to the scriptures of the Jews a curious combination of Greek-Roman mythology and philosophy, written as propaganda rather than as history, Christianity presents a " doctrine of salvation " which may be briefly stated as follows:

God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the Garden of Eden. He gave them freedom to use all the things of the Garden save a certain tree of knowledge, the fruit of which they were strictly forbidden to eat. Eve, tempted by the serpent, in turn tempted her husband who ate of the fruit. God became angry at such gross disobedience and drove his creatures out of the Garden. Adam thus became a worker for his living, and Eve a bearer of children through great travail. God was a jealous god and, therefore, could not pardon the sinner until that sinner, by a suitable sacrifice, won the right to divine pardon. But, obviously, the pardon of God could not be won by any common sacrifice. Only a godlike sacrifice could win a divine pardon. In due time, Jesus Christ, the " only begotten Son of God," left his exalted state in heaven, was born of a Virgin, and lived for the express purpose of dying sacrificially and thus winning God's pardon for mankind who were under the bondage of "original sin," that is, the sin of Adam. The Son of God died on Golgotha, not because he had done anything worthy of death, but in order that God's wrath ? might be turned away from erring man. This sacrifice, being a godlike sacrifice, was satisfactory to God, and God turned once more in love toward his children. But the forgiveness of God could be attained only through "saving faith" in the atonement of Jesus. All who turn from their sins and accept Christ as their "personal Savior" are eligible to God's forgiveness and are saved from eternal punishment. These are to enjoy eternal life in heaven with the Lord Jesus Christ, while the unsaved are to spend eternity in hell.

It is not difficult for the student of history to trace the derivation of this series of myths. Many other primitive peoples besides the Hebrews and early Christians have had their creation stories, their saviour gods, their atonements, and their resurrections. The modern man knows these stories as legends, and it is a source of surprise to him that anybody but the most illiterate should regard such legends as historical facts. It is quite understandable that older generations could do so, but anthropology has in recent years cast such a blaze of light upon these formerly obscure fields that it would seem that all educated men should know the facts. Every educated man today has access to information which makes further belief in these myths as historical facts impossible. Yet we find them preached in the Christian pulpit without apology or explanation.

In this connection I want to cite an illustration taken directly from the life of our times. In 1925 two boys, one ten and the other twelve years of age, made a confession of faith as a condition to being received as members of the Christian church. I quote a few of the questions put to these young boys together with their answers.[1]

> Question: Why do you wish to make a confession?
> Answer: Because I want everlasting life.
> Q. What did you have?
> A. I had death.
> Q. Where did you get that death?
> A. I inherited it from Adam.

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[1] See "The Presbyterian," April 30, 1925.

Q. Do you believe in the miracles of Christ?  
A. Certainly. They are little samples of God's kingdom that Christ gave while he was here on earth.  
Q. How do you become a member of God's kingdom?  
A. Christ took death upon himself. That is, he became separated from God for a moment and said that if I believed in him I would not see death because he saw it for me.  
Q. Do you understand this?  
A. No, but I believe it.  
Q. Who is the ruler of this world?  
A. The devil.  
Q. Are you sure?  
A. Certainly. If God ruled the world it would not be filled with trouble, sorrow, and wickedness of all kinds, ending in death.

It is not my purpose to analyze this very interesting contribution to the religious literature of our era. I merely cite it as an illustration of the Christianity which is being taught in America today, nineteen hundred years after the death of Jesus and sixteen hundred years after the formal recognition of Christianity by Constantine. This is Christianity. There is not an orthodox Christian church in America that does not agree with every phrase I I have written. There is not an orthodox minister who could not say " Amen " both to the statement which I have written and to the questionnaire submitted to the boys, thankful that there are still boys like that.

Today Christianity is divided into two groups: Catholicism and Protestantism. It is commonly supposed that these two bodies are different in every respect. The farmer in Georgia, the ranchman of Texas, the carpenter in New Jersey, or the commuter of Long Island, whether Catholic or Protestant, will inform you that Catholicism and Protestantism are as far apart as the north pole is from the south pole; and his statement will be agreed to by the majority of Protestant ministers and probably all Catholic priests. The fact is, however, that there is little essential disagreement between the two great branches of Christianity. The same fundamental doctrines, such as the doctrine of God, of immortality, of the deity of Christ, the Virgin birth, the resurrection, and the atonement are common to both branches. A few doctrines which have come from papal pronouncement in comparatively recent times are rejected by Protestants, but even here Protestantism has corresponding doctrines. Catholics, for example, accept the infallibility of the Pope while Protestants accept the infallibility of the Bible. The dissimilarities lie outside the realm of doctrine. Perhaps the greatest of them is organization. The Catholic church remains a world-organization, while Protestantism has divided and subdivided into innumerable sects and societies.

There is, of course, a very great value in such a world-organization not only to the church itself but to all the world. It is becoming very clear that the safety of the world depends upon some kind of world organization. The era of non-interrelationship among nations passed long ago. Nations today are so closely related that that which affects one is bound to affect all. A cloud of war in a distant province may be but the size of a man's hand but that cloud will ultimately cover the earth. The World War demonstrated the fact that war can no longer be carried on between two nations while other nations look on disinterestedly. When war begins anywhere on the face of the globe all nations are immediately concerned. Knowing these things to be true, the nations of the world have been working for more than two decades to bring about an efficient world-organization. The Hague Court, the League of Nations, the World Court, — all are efforts to create a supernational body to which an appeal may be made when war threatens. If at the beginning of the World War there had been in existence an organization such as that which flourished during the Middle Ages, an organization to which men of all nations might have turned for help or rather to which they were compelled to turn for approval, it is safe to say that there would have been no war. Or if, failing to prevent the outbreak of hostilities, such an organization had been in existence at the time of the Armistice, nations might have turned to it, and untold misery and injustice would have been avoided. Certainly a united church can exert greater power and influence than a disjointed body such as we see in Protestantism.

Of these two branches of Christianity, Catholicism is today in a much stronger position than its younger sister. There is no place for the modern man in orthodox Protestantism. It is not merely its unscientific attitude, its adherence to antiquated doctrines, that causes him to reject it. It is rather its weakness of organization, its ineffectiveness, that makes him stand aloof. Protestantism simply has not worked, and the modern, intelligent man has little time for institutions that do not work. On the other hand Catholicism appears to have stood the test of time. It seems to have worked. Catholicism is world wide in its influence, and it appears to possess an authority over its adherents which no other organization can boast. The modern man finds these claims to be of great interest. He sees the greatness of the Catholic church. Its history amazes him. It has endured for many centuries while other institutions have fallen. Protestantism, with but few centuries to its credit, has disintegrated and is powerless.

Two arguments in favor of Catholicism are presented by liberal Catholics. The first of these runs as follows: the great mass of people are unable to think for themselves. They are incapable of self-control. Genuine progress depends upon either the ability of the mass of people to practise self-control, or upon the power of some superior body to exercise control over the people. The common people must be compelled to obey the moral law. Immorality run rife is an enemy of progress and of civilization. It is necessary that there be some powerful influence exerted over the public mind if we are to maintain sanity in the public mind. Especially is this true in a country like America where every man is independent. Independence is excellent when and where people are able to practice self-control. But the vast majority of people are not able to do so. They, therefore, must be controlled. The Catholic church claims to control its members. Whether that claim is true today or not, the fact is that it is the only institution which offers any hope of such control. Therefore, the modern man becomes very tolerant of Catholicism, in many cases reaching the conclusion that were it not for the fact that the Catholic church accepts doctrines which he finds it impossible to believe, he would unite with that church. At this point the second argument is presented to him. It is not presented by the priesthood but either by the liberal Catholics who have been born into Catholicism and who seek some way of justifying their continued adherence to the faith of their fathers, or by liberal non-Catholics who, reluctant to cast aside their older faith, throw in their lot with Catholicism. In either case the train of logic runs thus: the doctrines of Christianity are, indeed, superstitions. They are hang-overs from former ages and the church would be better off without them, but they seem to be so intimately interwoven in the fabric of the church that to cut them away would be to destroy the church itself. Besides, it is not necessary to destroy them. They are, after all, merely symbols. Viewed as such they become to the aesthetic eye things of great beauty. The real value of Catholicism lies in its universality, its world-organization. This means safety for the future and protection for the present. For the sake of maintaining safety, liberals have the imperative duty of allying themselves with the Catholic church. They should forget the doctrines. Indeed, by making these non-essentials points of separation they are actually magnifying them into an importance which they do not deserve. The truly intelligent plan is to allow the doctrines to become simply symbolic and to work for the extension of the organization. In this way, and in this way alone, genuine values can be enhanced and unimportant things will be left behind. The time will come when the Catholic Church will be truly progressive and when it will exercise that universal control which the nations of the world so greatly need. Such is the argument that liberal Catholics advance.

The position of the Liberal in Catholicism has become very attractive to many intelligent men of our time; but it seems to be a position which will not bear too close a scrutiny. It rests upon the assumption that the church approves the action of the intelligent man in dismissing certain of the doctrines in which he cannot believe. That is, that the church holds a dual position: to the unlearned it speaks with authority, demanding the literal acceptance of all its doctrines; to the learned it speaks a different language, permitting the symbolic interpretation of the doctrines. The fallacy in this position lies in the fact that such a dualism would mean the sacrifice of the church's authority. The church cannot say to one person, or to one group of persons, you *must* believe, and to another group of persons, you need not believe, and retain its authority. If the church permits certain doctrines to be cast aside to please certain individuals, what assurance have we that it will not throw aside other things more vital in our eyes, merely because those other things displease certain other people? If then the church insists on the validity of its doctrines, it sacrifices its universality, for the intelligent man cannot stultify himself by accepting those doctrines. If, on the contrary, the church permits the intelligent man to cast away such doctrines, it retains its universality at the cost of its authority. In either case, however, it ceases to be what the modern world needs, for to be what the modern world needs the church must retain both its authority and its universality.

Catholicism thus fails to provide a true religious home for the modern man. This is true for a different reason from that which I have suggested. The fact is that Catholicism does not possess the control that it claims to possess. Vast numbers of people are outside its influence. In America even many of those who have been under Catholic control in their former countries voluntarily liberate themselves from their religious allegiance on reaching their new home. They seem to have thrown off allegiance to state and church simultaneously. Thus it is that many people, nominally Catholic, decline to accept the overlordship of the church. They go to mass when they please, confess what they choose to confess, and live much the same as their Protestant neighbors.

I repeat, that there is very little difference between the two branches of Christianity, so that when we ask — What is Christianity? — we are not compelled to make a distinction between Catholicism and Protestantism. The one apparent distinction, that of world-organization, is seen upon examination to be illusory. And since there is no distinction between these two great branches of Christianity, there seems to be no reason for their separateness. Ultimately it would seem that conservatives should unite in one body and that that body should be the Catholic church.

To bring this chapter to an end let us state the definition which history gives to our question. Christianity is a religion of redemption. Its chief emphasis is upon the " next world." It recognizes the " evil in this present world " as inherent. This world is the province of the devil. He who becomes a part of this world in spirit becomes " worldly minded." Christians are those who " keep themselves unspotted from the world." They are a " peculiar people," set apart from this world, dedicated to eternal life in heaven. They are those who " endure hardness as a good soldier " in order that they may gain everlasting happiness in the next world.

Now all these doctrines the modern man is compelled to reject. He is not concerned with redemption because he does not accept the philosophy upon which the doctrine rests. He does not believe in a devil and therefore does not find any meaning in the phrase that this world belongs to the devil. Besides, he has a feeling that there is a great deal of good in this world. He certainly does not believe in the doctrine of the next world. And he knows that this doctrine has had an evil effect on human progress.

Christianity is not a satisfactory religion to the modern man. In its older forms, at least, he rejects it completely. The new presentation of Christianity he must examine. This new presentation had its inception in the Modernist Revolt which took place very shortly after the World War. This Modernist Revolt we will consider in the following chapter.

## *II. The Modernist Substitute*

CHRISTIANITY began in disputation and, at least in its Protestant branch, remains today a religion of internal disagreements. It would be difficult even to name the many varieties of Protestant Christianity that flourish in our own country today, and tomorrow we should be compelled to revise the list for new sects are constantly in the process of formation. But there is little difference among them all in fundamental doctrines. The distinctions which once gave a semblance of sanity to the organization of different denominations have been completely obliterated. The once prominent division of Arminians and Calvinists is rapidly disappearing. The breach has been healed to such an extent that there is today a strong tendency toward organic union between the two chief representatives of the division, the Methodists and the Presbyterians. People rarely if ever unite with a particular church because of an honest examination of its doctrines. They join the church because of the popularity of its minister, the social prestige of certain of its members, the tact of its leading spirits, or more probably, the proximity of the church building to their own dwellings. There is, of course, no real reason for the multiplicity of religious sects. The brief statement of Christianity which I have given in the preceding chapter is equally acceptable to Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Congregationalists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and all the rest.

It was inevitable that such a theological system should sooner or later meet with objection among its adherents. There have always been objectors to the ruling ideas of the Christian system but until very recent times the objector has been silenced with comparative ease. At first he was hushed by the bolder spirit and keener dialectics of his orthodox antagonists, and later he was quieted by methods less gentle but even more effective. In recent times these methods of compulsion have been destroyed, in the one case by political liberty and in the other by increasing scientific knowledge. We have witnessed the development of a movement called Modernism. Its advocates have been influenced by two facts: (1) the effect on their own minds of the new scientific attitude; and (2) the increasing deflection of educated people from the church. Younger ministers of the Christian church are taking courses in our higher institutions of learning where they are compelled to use the scientific method. Here they are taught that doubt, instead of being a sin, is actually a desirable quality of the mind. Inevitably they have applied a questioning attitude toward the dogmas which they had been taught to accept unquestioningly and they have discovered that many of the ancient beliefs cannot endure the test of scientific analysis. They have begun to study the early records of Christianity with clearer vision, and they have found that many of the doctrines rest on very unsound historical bases. The critical sense has displaced credulity. Dogmas which once had universal acceptance now stand out under the blazing light of honest criticism. Candid analysis has taken these dogmas out of their accustomed setting, and has found them to be just like any other philosophic statement, true only when they are able to stand the test of experience. These younger ministers have faced the alternative of dishonest agreement with, or sincere rejection of the ancient doctrines, and with fear and trembling, knowing the penalty that men have always paid for liberty, they have chosen the latter. According to George Herbert Betts out of two hundred students in five leading theological seminaries only eleven per cent believe in hell, a bare eighteen per cent believe in the resurrection of the body, and but eight per cent believe in the literal inspiration of the Bible.

The statement of Christianity which has been offered above is not satisfactory to Modernists and they substitute another. Genuine Christianity, they declare, is not at all a religion evolved during the first four centuries of our era. It is, on the contrary, a religion established by Jesus at the very beginning of the era, on his own unique life and teaching. All the accretions of the nineteen centuries which have followed the death of Jesus are corruptions, and our most important duty today is to liberate Christianity from these corruptions, dismiss the false doctrines from our minds, and recover the lost radiance of the original teachings of Jesus. In short, Modernists have raised aloft over the ashes of a dying Christian church a banner emblazoned with the words, "Back to Christ!" The Modernist extends the work of Luther. Luther did not make a clear cleavage between himself and the Catholic

Church. He did not create any new doctrines. He fashioned certain doctrines out of the dogmas already existing within Catholicism. He accepted the dogma of the infallibility of the Bible on the basis of the principle which was already held though not expressed in Catholicism and which found expression in the encyclical of Pius IX in 1870.

The appeal of the Modernist will be readily accepted, no doubt, by many people who are disgusted with the older creeds and who are seeking some religious philosophy which dismisses the obviously false teachings of Christianity, but many of these people are not too critical of the substitute which is offered them. Others, who have not yet become accustomed to pouring new wine into old bottles, will insist on making a more thorough examination. It is so easy for the mystic to believe. The need of comfort inspires belief in the most irrational theories. Every man, being at some time or other a needy man, discovers within himself a readiness to believe. At that very point he must pause, like a mariner who for the moment has lost his bearings, and consult the compass.

The fundamental assumption of Modernism, namely, that Jesus was the founder of Christianity, is, as all students of the subject know, without foundation in fact. Dean Inge writes:

> There is no evidence that the historical Christ ever intended to found a new religion. He neither attempted to make a schism in the Jewish church nor to substitute a new system for it.

Such an admission is met with so frequently that one would suppose that the banner with its slogan "Back to Christ" would have fallen into disuse long ago; but it is the peculiar logic of Modernism that the very speakers who express the denial of Modernism's fundamental assumption are among those who most vigorously wave the banner. Dean Inge himself stands forth as one of the most prominent defenders of Modernism. Though they occasionally make so damning an admission as that Jesus did not establish Christianity, the Modernists nevertheless continue to act exactly as if he had. It remains for Jewish scholars to put the matter frankly. Lewis Browne in "This Believing World" writes of Jesus as follows:

> He did not preach a radically new gospel. His prayers were made up of verses which the Pharisee rabbis were

wont to recite in the synagogues, and which are to be found even today in the orthodox Jewish book of prayer. He was not a heretic in the sense that Ikhnaton or Zoroaster or Buddha were heretics. Outwardly he was distinctly a conforming Jew.

Another scholarly Jew who has written extensively on the subject is Dr. Joseph Klausner. Throughout Dr. Klausner's book there is a constant recognition of the fact that Jesus was a Jew in every respect, and that he never dreamed of being a Messiah to non-Jews. Every unprejudiced scholar of repute agrees that Jesus was in no sense whatsoever the founder of Christianity, and that nothing was farther from his mind than the establishment of a new religion.

Modernists insist that the teaching of Jesus is unique, and that upon his unique teaching and manner of life Christianity is established. Christianity, therefore, means to the Modernist loyalty to Jesus, that is, loyalty to what he said and what he did. It is, therefore, fitting that we ask: what was there that was original in the teaching of Jesus? Certainly, no originality is manifested in such discourses as the Sermon on the Mount, for these aphorisms may be found scattered throughout the sayings of the prophets and those of contemporary teachers in Palestine at the time and just before the time of Jesus. The plea that Jesus made was in behalf of a return to the old idealism of the prophets, and in making this plea he quoted those ancient teachers again and again. He cannot be called a plagiarist for he made no claim to originality. Had he done so, those who heard him speak would have been moved to laughter for they were well versed in the literature of the nation. The claim of originality did not come until many years after his death. He himself was content to be a voice calling the people of his own nation back from that which he regarded as a dangerous departure from the faith of the fathers.

Jesus was a true conservative. The liberal of that time was the Saducee. The Saducee was the cultured man of his race, a man with a world view, not narrow or provincial as the Pharisees were, but cosmopolitan, welcoming the culture of the Greeks and Romans. He fraternized with those who like himself were cosmopolitan in their tastes, and thus he fell under the condemnation of the Jewish nationalists among whom we must place Jesus of Nazareth. With characteristic Jewish contempt for things not Jewish, Jesus frankly detested the Saducees and dismissed them from his mind as unworthy his attention. He confined his attack to the Pharisees whom at first he tried to win back to the primitive ideals of Jewry. Failing to do this, he used them as horrible examples of selfishness and egotism before the peasantry to whom he promised rich rewards when he should at last come into his kingdom. Jesus' attitude toward the Saducees was not unlike that of the Fundamentalists of our own time who hate education because, as they declare, education leads people away from the "Gospel truth." Jesus evidences throughout his public life an attitude of contempt for higher culture. He accepted the Jewish customs and hated all foreign importations whether of things or of ideas. Without adding anything whatsoever to the sayings of the Prophets, he took those sayings and illustrated them with stories — which may or may not have been original — chosen from the life of those around about him. He taught men to do the will of God, and the will of God to him meant the Law and the Prophets. He found the religious leaders of the times insisting on the observance of what he regarded as petty rules instead of the Law of Moses and the ethics of the Prophets, and incidentally gaining from these observances some very rich rewards; he found his fellow countrymen exploited by the Roman overlords with whom some of the Jewish leaders were actually in collusion; he found the Sadducees gladly accepting the culture of the Greeks and Romans. His attack, therefore, was threefold: he attacked the priests and the scribes for their disloyalty to the ancient law, the Sadducees for their foreign culture, and the Romans for their exploitation of the poor. Because of this opposition to the exploitation of the poor, he has been called "the first Socialist," but Jesus was no more the founder of a political movement than he was the founder of a new religion, and there is nothing in his teaching which, without very ingenious interpretation, can be made to agree with Socialistic philosophy. His threefold attack he made in Galilee for a year or more, and since Galilee was largely a rural district and since rural people are generally more loyal to the fundamental institutions than city dwellers, he attracted to himself not a little attention by his conservative attitude. At last he made the fatal mistake of going into Jerusalem itself, and from the moment of his entrance into the capital his fate was sealed. That he debated the consequences of his proposed action is quite clear, for we find him intimating to his disciples the possibility of his own defeat.[1] Something — perhaps the assurances of his own disciples and especially of the impetuous Peter [2] — caused him to make his decision.

At first the people acclaimed him eagerly as the long expected deliverer, but they soon found that Jesus did not measure up to the proportions which they had expected in such a deliverer, and they became uninterested. Perhaps it was out of pique and disappointment that they joined in the hue and cry in Pilate's hall. There can be no serious doubt that the real enemies of Jesus were the Jews. The attempt to make the Romans solely responsible for the tragedy of Calvary springs out of a questionable generosity on the part of liberal Protestants toward the Jews. The Catholics, on the contrary, have always maintained that Jesus met his death primarily at the hands of the Jews, and an unprejudiced study of the facts appears to support the Catholic contention. Jesus was put to death because the Jewish leaders wanted him to be put to death. Pilate seems to have been indifferent to the whole affair. To him it represented only another uprising of the Jewish rabble which could be disposed of in short order by a centurian's command. There had been many such uprisings and each had been frustrated. Another disturbance would merely furnish additional amusement for the soldiers. That Pilate was an unjust judge is a defensible argument, but that he would have caused Jesus to have been executed without the agitation of the powerful Jewish leaders can be defended only by those who wish to curry favor with liberal Jews of today. Had not the Jewish leaders manifested such opposition to this teacher, Pilate would have had him whipped — just to show his contempt for such disturbers of the peace — and then he would have dismissed the whole matter from mind. But the Jews would not listen to such a disposition of the case. They demanded this man's death and threatened the procurator with their continued opposition if he did not accede to their demands. Pilate, confronted with this dilemma, decided the issue on the basis of expediency. Jesus had no power save that of a few common people who had deserted him at the moment of trouble. The Jewish leaders had a great deal of power. They could make things very uncomfortable for the governor. Rome, at the moment, wanted peace, and estimated the value of her governors on the basis of their ability to keep peace and order within their provinces. A report direct to Rome from the Jewish leaders would cause the governor no end of trouble. Pilate washed his hands of the whole affair — an action indicative of supreme indifference — and allowed the peasant teacher to be executed. That action held great significance for the future. There can be little doubt that had not Jesus died on the cross, little would have been heard of Christianity by later ages. The teachings of the prophet of Nazareth would have been swallowed up as other teachings were swallowed up, and the year 70 A.D. would have marked the end of the endeavor to purify the Jewish faith. Pilate wrote his name in history by that action. If he had followed his original inclination to dismiss the case with a scourging, his name would have been long since forgotten together with that of the man whom he condemned to the cross.

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[1] The account has been confused by a later attempt to make Jesus prophesy his own death.

[2] Perhaps the real remorse of Peter was not because of the celebrated denial of Jesus in the court, but because Peter realized that he was responsible for advising Jesus to come to Jerusalem. If Jesus had not taken that advice he would not have been killed. Jesus seems to have depended on Peter a great deal for advice. Peter was much older and seems to have been the constant counselor of his master.

These are the general facts which we find as we examine the claim that Christianity was founded by Jesus. We might, of course, dismiss the claim at this point as being without foundation in fact. However, let us tentatively accept the Modernist claim and try to discover exactly what Jesus taught, since if Christianity consists of the teachings of Jesus, it is highly important that we have *exactly* what Jesus said and not what others say that he said.

We have already observed that the teachings of Jesus are so intermingled with earlier and later writings that any genuine word of Jesus is completely submerged. Jesus constantly quoted from the earlier prophets and from contemporary teachers. After his death, disciples wrote the gospels which were not in any real sense historical but which were excellent specimens of propaganda written for the purpose of establishing Christianity as the religion of Rome. There is, therefore, but one thing that we can do. Lacking the means of isolating any genuine word of Jesus (and an examination of the works of scholars in this field proves beyond doubt that we do lack such means) we are compelled to take *all* the words which are attributed to him in our effort to discover just what he did teach, and we shall be compelled to take them without regard to chronological order. It would be of great assistance to us in our understanding of the life of Jesus if we could be sure of the exact order of events, if, for example, we could know whether it was at the beginning or at the end of the ministry that Peter declared that Jesus was the Messiah, or if we knew exactly when the temptation occurred. The record makes it appear that this event took place immediately following the baptism, but the nature of the incident seems to place it in a later period, if indeed, the whole story is not — as it almost certainly is — an addition by some later writer. Any attempt to follow a chronological order is bound to meet with failure. From the beginning of the public ministry to its very end the whole story is without orderly arrangement, and there is very little, and nothing that is authentic, of the earlier life of Jesus.

One preliminary thought must be stated before we proceed to an examination of the record. The defenders of Christianity — whether Fundamentalists or Modernists — are emotionally incapable of informing us of the teaching of Jesus for they accept literally all the words of Jesus which coincide with their preconceived theory of what Jesus meant, and they *interpret* all that does not meet the conditions of that theory so that it will appear to mean what they want it to mean. Thus, certain words of Jesus which, taken literally, would be objectionable to them are made to conform to the desired pattern by careful interpretation. In this manner Jesus is made to be either a god or an impossibly good man. We are perfectly willing to admit that if we come to a study of Jesus with a worshipful attitude we shall gain nothing but additional cause for adulation. But such an approach is not scientific. We shall be compelled to approach our study with disinterestedness if we hope to learn anything of value. We must approach our study of Jesus exactly as Rupert Hughes began his study of the life of Washington. For many years Washington had been regarded as a sort of minor god. It was heresy to suggest that there were any faults in his character. Then Hughes wrote his "insulting" life of the father of his country, and George Washington became a human being instead of a national deity.

Some one should perform this same service for Jesus of Nazareth. Here we have space only to suggest what such a study would set forth. Out of the confusion of the record there emerges the picture of an individual who was not the faultless being that Christianity has presented. Taking our stand as a stranger to the tradition which has grown up about the historic Christ, we shall seek to discover exactly what he said — all that he said or is supposed to have said — and to form from what he said some idea of the kind of man he was.

The traditional picture of Jesus is that of a humble, courageous person whose every word was a word of wisdom and whose every act was an act of unselfishness. This traditional Jesus thousands of men, the world over, have come to love, and it is on the basis of the assumption that Jesus was this wise and courageous person that Modernists invite all men to become "followers of Christ Jesus." Is this traditional picture consistent with *all* his words?

Whenever one speaks of the words of Jesus we naturally think of the discourses which he gave in the presence of the multitude such as the Sermon on the Mount and the parables by the wayside.

These moments were the spectacular moments of his life. The sermons were made up largely if not entirely of quotations from other teachers. A man's most self-revealing words are not those which he uses in public addresses. They are those which he employs in private conversations with his friends. If all that politicians affirm in campaign speeches about themselves and their conduct of public offices were true, we should be enjoying the happiness of heavenly bliss today; but even the politician has been known to speak a different language in conversations with his political cronies. If we have any authentic words of Jesus they are to be found in his conversations with the disciples. To arrive at the real thought of Jesus one such conversation is worth more than all his public addresses. In our study, therefore, we shall seek the secret places away from the multitude and away from the Pharisees, away from all criticism and opposition, where Jesus talked intimately with those upon whom he depended to carry on his work.

Jesus has been presented as a man of supreme courage. It has been said — and said truly — that he held opinions which were bitterly opposed by the political and religious rulers. It has been said that for the sake of these opinions he bravely faced the hostility of men who could have killed him at any moment during his ministry and who actually did put an end to his life in a most horrible manner. From this opposition, we are told, he never drew back, never hesitated. He faced his enemies unfalteringly and at last stood before Pilate unafraid. He went to the cross with head held high and spirit undismayed, a noble, heroic soul. That is a picture that is sure to appeal to the enthusiasm and imagination of youth. The question is: is it a true picture?

When we actually turn to the words of Jesus we find much that it is difficult to fit into the picture of the hero. On different occasions we find Jesus evading issues which would have brought him into trouble with the authorities. As a matter of fact before his departure for Jerusalem there was scarcely any evidence of heroism, and there were many evidences of evasiveness revealed by his conversations with the disciples.

The first of these conversations is recorded in the tenth chapter of Matthew, indeed, this gospel holds practically all the conversations between Jesus and his disciples. After giving his disciples some general instruction, Jesus makes a statement which awakens our curiosity. " What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye on the house-tops." To the devotee these words hold little significance. There are probably thousands of Christians who have never consciously read these words. But they are not words to be passed over lightly. If they stood alone they might be dismissed as merely a figure of speech, but coming as they do in connection with conduct which is familiar to the reader of this and other gospels, they must be regarded as something more than a rhetorical figure. They certainly suggest an element of secrecy. We are not in the habit of associating secrecy with courage. We criticise " secret diplomacy " especially when it comes from religious leaders. We do not like the idea of " playing politics " in religious circles. Those who are at all familiar with the inner workings of religious conventions are well acquainted with the fact that there is not a little log-rolling and wire-pulling among religious leaders. The steam roller is not peculiar to political conventions. Moderators and bishops are not always elected to office because they are the most holy men in the assemblies. They are sometimes chosen because they " know the ropes " and are able to wield the necessary influence to pass desired ecclesiastical legislation. In the passage quoted, is it possible that Jesus was " putting something over on the opposition "? Was he calling upon his disciples to do that which he himself was afraid to do? Why did he speak to them in secret? Why did he whisper to them in the ear? Why does he tell his disciples not to be afraid when he himself has been constantly fearful?

Let us read further. Another interesting incident in the life of Jesus is to be found in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew. Here the disciples bluntly ask him why he does not speak to the multitudes in the simple, clear manner which he invariably used with themselves. And he answers them quite frankly. One is almost shocked by his frankness on this occasion. We have always been taught that Jesus employed parables in order to make his meaning clear to those who would not understand had he spoken otherwise. I remember hearing a sermon preached by a celebrated minister on the occasion of a teachers' convention. The speaker tried to prove that Jesus, in using the method of the parable, had anticipated twentieth century pedagogy. I suppose the opportunity was too rich to be wasted, or perhaps the minister merely desired to show that he, too, understood modern pedagogy. At any rate he was mistaken when he said, as he did say, that Jesus used the parable to make his meaning clear to dull minds. Jesus himself denies that such was his reason. The facts were as follows: The disciples, observing that he constantly made use of parables when speaking to the multitudes, asked why he did so, and he replied that he wished to *prevent the people from understanding.* If Matthew leaves us in any doubt about the matter, Luke makes it quite clear. " Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God! but to others in parables, that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." Why did Jesus want to keep others from understanding? Was it because his teaching was offensive to the rulers? Did Jesus want to protect himself from their hostility? We have no criticism to offer of him even if he did want to protect himself. That was perfectly human. But it does not fit into the picture which has been drawn of Jesus as the hero.

Another incident which shows Jesus' desire to keep his work and his whereabouts secret is to be found in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew. Peter has persuaded Jesus that he is the Messiah. It is clear that Jesus has been indulging this thought for a long time. The persistency with which he presses the inquiry evidences a great desire to elicit from his friends that assurance which would convince himself of that which he was most eager to believe. Jesus was evidently disturbed by the fact that the prophecies regarding the Messiah had not been fulfilled in their entirety in his case. According to these prophecies the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. Notwithstanding the efforts of later writers to make it appear that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, it is quite clear that he was not born there but rather in or near Nazareth. This and other discrepancies between prophecy and fact, as well as a natural reticence which characterized Jesus before this particular event, raised doubts in his own mind as to the possibility of his claiming the exalted position. The impetuous Peter brings the matter out into the open by his declaration, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." Jesus praises his ardent disciple for the "revelation" but commands him and the other disciples to *keep the matter quiet.* When we turn from Matthew to Mark the reluctance of Jesus to have his presence and his work made public is repeatedly shown. There are at least six recorded incidents which conclude with the words, "he charged them that they should not make it known." Indeed, these words form a sort of chorus to be expected by the reader as a conclusion to every miracle, and we are compelled to ask why he should be so desirous to maintain a secrecy as to his movements and deeds. What reason can there be save the fear of the consequences of a public declaration of his purpose? In Mark 8:22–26, after healing a blind man, Jesus sent him away with the command, "Do not tell it to any one in the town." It was from the "town" that Jesus looked for opposition and persecution. The knowledge, therefore, must be kept from the townsfolk. After the transfiguration, he strictly commanded his disciples that they should tell no one what they had seen. In Luke 9:21–22, the reason is clearly stated for his secrecy. Peter has answered that Jesus is "The Christ of God" and Jesus commands the disciples not to make it known and adds, "The Son of Man must suffer many things . . . and be slain." In spite of the fact that the record has been "doctored," it is clear that the connection between these verses is that of command and the reason for the command.

After this incident in which Jesus is convinced that he is the Messiah, we find less of fear and more of boldness in the attitudes of Jesus. In the thirteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus makes a truly heroic gesture. Some of the more friendly Pharisees warn him to depart and escape death at the hands of Herod. Jesus replies, " Go tell that fox, Behold I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." The meaning lies in that last word. He is going to Jerusalem where he anticipates finding two things to be true. He expects the common people to rise to his leadership, and he looks for divine protection. After the beginning of the journey to the capital we find little of fear in Jesus. Something has occurred to give him confidence. It is evidently the conviction that he is in some special manner protected by God. He enters the temple, sustained by this trust, and drives out the money-changers. It is his one heroic moment. He soon learns that the people will not accept his claim, and that he is in imminent peril. He at once falls back into the old habit of playing safe. When people address questions to him he seeks safety in evasion.

His enemies try to entrap him. They put to him questions which, if answered honestly and frankly, would bring him into conflict with the Roman authorities. But these questions are on issues that are vital to the common people whom he has hoped to win to his cause. Rome has been crushing the common people beneath its iron heel. It has levied upon them exorbitant taxes for the non-payment of which they have been thrown into prison. Young men are being conscripted to serve in the Roman armies, and young maidens are being dragged off to a disgusting life of concubinage. The religious liberties of the Jews are being interfered with by supercilious officers of the Roman army. Here is a splendid opportunity for a hero to prove his mettle. Jesus has been preaching the liberation of the poor from poverty and oppression. He has been upholding the rights of the faithful to worship God after the manner of the prophets. He has been a defender of the Law. Here is his opportunity to reassert these claims and win the common people to him. But he balks at a frank statement of his ambition. He replies, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's." It is a complete evasion. Christians of our own time, possessed of a delightful sense of humor, say that Jesus showed great shrewdness in his reply. That may be true, but certainly his was not the act of a hero, nor was it wise from the point of view of expediency for it alienated the very people he wished to win.

The second characteristic attributed to Jesus is humility. In orthodox circles it is difficult to tell which of two Biblical characters is regarded as having been more humble, Moses or Jesus. Probably if the matter were made the subject of a questionnaire, Jesus would emerge the winner. It is to be observed, however, that humility is not regarded as such a desirable trait as it was in former times. Youth of today are not so strongly attracted by the quality of humility as were the youth of a half century ago. Virility rather than humility is more to be desired by young manhood and young womanhood of our times. The stress and strain of our competitive life have brought young men to set a high value on strength; and the liberation of womanhood from the old inhibitions has led young womanhood to look with favor upon physical vigor. The almost effeminate Jesus of an older day has been displaced by a sprightly, masculine Jesus who, to use the modern vernacular, told men " where to get off." Consequently, we find Jesus popularly presented as a splendid example of physical and moral young manhood.

It is rather to the older men and women of the church that the picture of a humble Jesus appeals. Men and women who have reached a state of impotency and who are approaching decrepitude are not inclined favourably toward a too virile Jesus. The contrast between such a figure and themselves is too painful. If they are to be Christ-like, they must have a Christ of more temperate mood. The church must accommodate both of these classes and it does so by calling Jesus a hero in the presence of youth, and a " man of sorrow and acquainted with grief " in the presence of the aged. Perhaps the picture of a humble Jesus is due to the words of an older Jewish prophet who wrote, " He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth," although these words were not spoken of Jesus and have no relation whatsoever to his life except as clever interpretation gives them such a relation. Perhaps the traditional humility of Jesus rests upon the words which are to be found in the great sermon, " Blessed are the poor in spirit." Perhaps it is an inference from other statements such as " If a man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also." Whatever the source of the tradition, the fact is that his life as revealed in the records does not prove the conception to be true. On the contrary, we find Jesus to have been an exceedingly egotistic person who placed his own wishes above the dearest relations of life. Men should hold every other activity as being inferior to the duty of becoming his followers. Pharisees who were unwilling to leave the positions which they had attained only after great study, in order to accept the teaching of an uneducated peasant, were treated to the outpourings of his wrath. Ordinary men who were not willing to leave home and wife and loved ones to become wanderers in his band were also cursed. The picture of the " gentle Jesus " fades as we actually review the demands which he made on his contemporaries.

All this would be understandable if orthodox dogma is accepted. If Jesus was a god, he might well have spoken in this egotistic fashion, for a god may properly be egotistic; but if Jesus was a man — and Modernists are willing to admit that he was a man — these words have the sound of egotism or fanaticism or both.

It is not necessary to pursue the thought further. From the point of view of the man who, uninfluenced by the traditions which have grown up about the figure of Jesus, picks up the gospels to read just what Jesus said, we have the picture of an uneducated peasant whose mind was confused, who opposed higher culture, who accepted the superstitions of his time, and who was timid in the presence of opposition. Coming under the influence of a strong man named John the Baptist, this young prophet is set on fire by the enthusiasm of this wilderness teacher who seems to have been a hater of the Roman government and a despiser of the culture of the times. From this contact Jesus goes back to his native province to preach to the peasantry. They, in turn, are fired by his dream of liberation from Rome, and by his insistence on a return to the old faith. As he becomes more accustomed to the work of preaching and as his band increases, he grows bolder. The adulation of his disciples raises his estimation of his own powers. At last a thought which has been lying in the depths of his soul for many months is brought out by the declaration of his leading disciple. Convinced that he is the long promised Messiah, that as such he will be protected by God, and that he will be received as such by the people, he determines to go into Jerusalem. He enters the temple, overthrows the tables of the money-changers and drives out traders and beasts with the words, "My father's house is a house of prayer but ye have made it a den of thieves." Notwithstanding this bold gesture the common people do not rise to acclaim him a leader. Perhaps they would have done so if he had been as fearless in answering questions that dealt with Rome as he was in opposing the money-changers. On the other hand, the city people were probably not as much opposed to this use of the temple as he had supposed they were. At any rate they did not receive him and he found himself standing amid the ruins of his great dream. The kingdom of heaven crashes to the earth, and he discovers that he is in imminent danger of falling into the hands of Rome. He tries to escape from the city by night. In the Garden of Gethsemane he prays to the God whom he has trusted to save him from danger. Setting a double watch, he goes forward and enters into prayer. So great is his fear of impending peril that he "sweats great drops of blood." His agony has brought on a hemorrhage. He finds his disciples asleep and he chastises them for not keeping watch. Even while he is speaking to them he is betrayed by one of his own trusted friends into the hands of the enemy. The rest of the disciples take flight to save their own skins. At last he stands before the Roman governor dumb. Why? Modernists declare that he recognized the injustice of the charge that was brought against him and refused to dignify his accusers by making a defense. Orthodox Christians affirm that all this was part of the plan of God and that since Jesus was God, he did not, of course, attempt to escape his own plan. One wonders why in that case he prayed for this escape in the garden, and orthodoxy has its answer in the dualism of the personality of Christ. However, neither of the explanations is satisfactory. May it not be that Jesus recognized the justice of the charges preferred against him and that at last he realized that he could expect help neither from God nor man, that indeed, he stood alone in the presence of the greatest power on earth, a power which he had attacked and from which he could expect no mercy? This explanation is at least as plausible as the others, and it certainly is more in accord with what we know of the habitual attitudes of Jesus. He leaves the "hall of justice" to go to the place of execution. At last he dies, a disillusioned man, crying out in the bitterness of the night, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In closing this chapter I wish to say that it is no part of my purpose to destroy the beauty that clings about the faded figure of Jesus. History holds little of beauty, and no one who loves the beautiful would seek to destroy the little that we have. You will ask me, then, why write about Jesus after this fashion? And my answer is brief: because the task is forced upon the seeker after truth by the half-way measures adopted by those who call themselves Modernists. If Modernism frankly admitted the fact that it is quite impossible to learn what Jesus taught, there would be no occasion to point out the inconsistencies in the plea for a return to Christ; but the fact is that the Modernist is as reluctant as the Fundamentalist to face the truth about Jesus. Fundamentalism interprets all the sayings of Jesus as consistent with its elaborate scheme of salvation. Modernism interprets all the sayings of Jesus as harmonious with its Jesus-pattern. In the interests of truth, therefore, it seems necessary that we reject both interpretations and look *all* the facts in the face. And when we do that we discover that Jesus was a man of whose life we know very little, and whose teaching is so involved in contradictions that it becomes useless as an aid in living the good life. Whatever his teaching was as he gave it to his disciples, however noble and helpful in its original presentation, the fact is that the garbled account which we have leaves us in utter ignorance of his meaning. Jesus is lost, has been lost for more than nineteen centuries, and unless some future hand shall turn up other and more reliable record, he will continue to be lost forever.

If in the writing of this chapter I have dwelt on the less beautiful side of the character of Jesus, my reason is that the other side is well known. I merely call attention to the fact that along with the beauty — which has been so persistently overemphasized by the defenders of Christianity — there is not a little of that which is less noble and sometimes even discreditable judged by our modern ethical standards. The Modernist substitute, therefore, does not satisfy the unprejudiced seeker after the truth. That truth-seeker would be willing to accept the proposition that Jesus lived as a peasant in Palestine nearly 2000 years ago, that he said many noble and beautiful things, and that he died as a martyr to his cause; but when Jesus is made to be the unique character that Christianity has pronounced him to have been, and when his teachings are put forward as safe guides for modern living, the truth-seeker declines to accept these claims without investigation. The inquiry which I raise in the next chapter is: Are the teachings of Jesus adequate to meet the needs of this modern age? If they are, it matters little whether they were presented by Jesus or whether some other prophet whom Jesus quoted actually originated them. Nor does it matter at all whether Jesus was the hero that tradition has insisted that he was, or whether he was, like most of the rest of us, something of the hero and very much of the coward. The only thing that really concerns us is: Are his teachings valuable to us in this present time? Can we find in them any assistance in meeting the problems with which we are confronted by the modern world? To the consideration of that question I now invite all those who share with me an interest in discovering, if we can, a religion that will be of service to us today.

## *III. Are the Teachings of Jesus Adequate Today?*

HISTORIC Christianity, according to the Modernists, is a mass of useless dogma which has grown up about the figure of Jesus, most of which is not only without value but is actually very harmful. No one has been more bitter in condemnation of historic Christianity than the Modernist. He avers that advancing scientific knowledge has reduced it to an absurdity. It is, therefore, the duty of the modern man to cast away the superstitions of historic Christianity and get back to the teachings of Jesus to find in them the only true way to a life of moral grandeur. In short, the Modernist insists that historic Christianity has failed but that the teachings of Jesus are adequate to the needs of our time. It is this assumption that I wish to examine in the present chapter.

The first thought that rises in our minds is that it seems very strange for the modern man to go back 2000 years for anything. It is his habit, rather, to look forward. We try to outdo the accomplishments of yesterday by those of today, and we hope that the achievements of today will be surpassed by those of tomorrow. There can be no doubt that it is possible to carry this habit to a fault. We need not and should not throw away the benefits that accrue to us from a study of history. Man learns somewhat by his successes and more by his mistakes, but either success or failure must be read in the pages of the past. In this sense the past is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway. But this is not at all what the Modernist has in mind when he calls upon us to " get back to Christ." He means that we are to take the words of Jesus as our guide. He asks us to trust a man who was altogether ignorant of the kind of life that we of this twentieth century are called upon to live, a man who would be quite lost were he set down in the midst of our complex civilization. Is this man one of the great minds of the past? Is he well known in history? Is his record well authenticated? On the contrary, he was an uneducated peasant who lived in one of the obscure, insignificant provinces of Rome. The bare facts of his life are known to no scholar on earth, and the record — the only record we have — is confused beyond disentanglement by men who wrote for the purpose of presenting arguments in favor of the establishment of Christianity, a religion which Jesus would disavow.

In the previous chapter we have tried to show that the confusion of the record makes it quite impossible to know what Jesus taught. Jesus may have been the brave man that centuries have believed him to be. The point is that we cannot tell whether he was or not. A study of the record shows that he was a strange mixture of nobleness and weakness, at one time full of courage and speaking words of beauty, at another time, slinking behind the robes of his disciples and speaking words of craftiness and cowardice. The fact is, we simply cannot get any real picture of this prophet, and if we allow the picture which we have to serve as our guide, our lives will be as confused as the record of his life is.

Notwithstanding this confusion, I desire in this present chapter to assume that the record is clear, that the words of Jesus are not obscured by propaganda, that that which is attributed to him was indeed his teaching. Assuming all this, let us apply the teaching of Jesus to the life of our times. It must be admitted that whatever value Jesus' words might have held for previous ages, if they do not prove adequate to the needs of our own time they are interesting only as relics of the past. The question is: Are the teachings adequate to our needs?

I shall not discuss the fact that there is much in our present life which Jesus had no knowledge of. I shall not treat the fact that he was not familiar with our modern scientific world, and that he knew nothing whatsoever of the problems which arise out of our modern industrial life. I take it that these facts are recognized by all who think with any clarity. I do wish, however, to take that which is reported as the teaching of Jesus and apply it to a few of the major problems of our time.

Probably the most important question before us today is that of the family. This institution, like all social institutions, is undergoing great changes. The former restraints which held womanhood in bondage to her lord and master have broken down. Woman is no longer either man's slave or his toy. She has stepped out of her chains and has taken her place at his side. She does all the things that he does, and sometimes she does them better than he does. She no longer regards marriage as her only avenue of expression. If she marries it is because she chooses that way of life from the great number of possible choices that lie before her. If she chooses that way of life she expects to become something other than her husband's concubine. She anticipates becoming his comrade, his adviser, and his friend. Marriage is not the mere bartering of her body in exchange for provisions and clothing. It is an exchange of a higher order which she reserves the right to terminate if she finds her expectations unattained. Children, too, occupy a new position. Public education has made the modern child more than the equal in intellectual attainment of the adult of a former time. Matters which in an earlier day were kept hidden from childish eyes are now no longer hidden. Law is no longer the chief consideration in the family relationship. The term marital love, which in an older day held something of a sinister meaning, is fast becoming a term of beauty.

It is inevitable that in a state of transition such as we have described there should be involved a number of questions that demand answers, and problems that call for solution. We are perplexed and disturbed by these problems for we know that upon their solution rests our future prosperity.

What, then, does Jesus say about the family? What help do his words give us in solving our problems?

Throughout his life Jesus appears to have had little regard for the family relationship. The fact that he himself did not marry is not particularly significant, though it does make his admonitions in this field of questionable value. The modern world is interested in experience as its teacher. It demands that its advisers know something of the matters about which they speak. Now, Jesus knew nothing at first hand of this most intimate relationship and, therefore, we hesitate to accept his teaching in this particular field of human behaviour as having any authority.

In addition to his refusal to participate in the relationship of husband and father, Jesus says many things which lead us to believe that he held the relationship in very low esteem. Take, for instance, his treatment of his mother. History is replete with examples of the praise of motherhood by great men, but we read no tribute that Jesus ever made to his mother. Only in one place is there to be found an evidence of solicitude for Mary. When Jesus was hanging on the cross he is reported to have said to John, "Behold thy mother," and to

Mary, "Behold thy son," but this passage is regarded by all competent scholars as altogether spurious.

On at least three different occasions Jesus spoke directly of this relationship. On the first of these occasions he said very boldly that he came to bring discord within the family circle. "I came to set a man at variance with his father and the daughter against her mother." On another occasion, in giving his ideal of the happy life on earth, he declared that in this life of ideal happiness "men are neither married nor given in marriage." Again, we find him saying that men should leave their homes, their parents, their wives, and their children, and become his followers. And on still another occasion he rejected the sacred duties which all normal men feel for the dead, "Let the dead bury their dead. Come thou and follow me." Such counsels as these will be acceptable only to those who wish to see the family destroyed. There are a few people today who desire the destruction of the family. They appear to see nothing beautiful in the family as an institution. On the contrary, they regard the family as the root of all evil. The child secures his first training in the family, he learns dependence from his father and mother, he begins in the first two years of his life habits that will follow him throughout life. Since these years are so very important, the child should be under special care during these years. The normal family life is destructive because of the ignorance and selfishness of the parents. Therefore, the child should be taken away from its parents and placed in a state institution where it may receive the care of specialists in child training. Since the child is the real reason for the family relationship, the family would rapidly disappear if this program were adopted. On the other hand, there are thousands of people who are not ready to cast this relationship overboard. The modern marriage may be in a bankrupt state, but the vast majority of people are not willing to admit that it is a defunct institution. There are thousands of people who see in it the dearest and most beautiful relationship of life. The case, which the proponent of the program suggested above recommends, is a very strong one. The criticism made of the family is in a very large measure true. Yet there are many intelligent people who believe that the solution which is offered raises more problems than it solves. It will not be denied that there are faults in our family relationship that need correction, and that there are laws that deal with the family that should be changed, but is the correct solution for these faults the destruction of the family? Or, does the cure lie rather in the abolition of ancient taboos and the etsablishment of freedom as the law of the family? It is not my purpose to enter this debate. I am merely calling attention to the confused state in which we find ourselves with regard to an institution which has been called the fundamental institution of our civilization; and I do so only in order to ask: What does Jesus have to offer us to help us in the midst of our perplexity and readjustment? There can be no doubt in the mind of any person who is at all familiar with the situation that we are passing through a period of transition and readjustment. What are the teachings of Jesus that will assist us in the solving of this question? We shall search in vain for any word that will help us. On the contrary, those who are today making an attack on the family have strong reasons for complacency when they read the words of Jesus.

Another question that troubles the modern world is that of divorce. Here we know exactly what Jesus taught, for the question of divorce was evidently a serious problem even in his day. It is the only social problem with which Jesus ever attempted to deal, and it is probable that the reason for his attempting to deal with it was not its social significance but its meaning for the individual. Jesus ruled out all possibility of divorce except in the case of a wife's infidelity. He did not, it is true, go as far as the Pharisees, who put the adulteress to death, but he strictly prohibited the remarriage of divorced persons, declaring that whoever married a divorced woman was guilty of adultery himself and brought the woman also into a state of adultery. In making this declaration, Jesus departed from the law of Moses, for Moses had said that a man might put away his wife because she did not " find favour in his eyes " and that the divorced wife might remarry. Jesus explained this action on the part of Moses on the ground that Moses gave it " because of the hardness of your hearts." This was the teaching of Jesus on divorce. He repeated it on different occasions, so that it could not have been merely another effort at evasion. Not content with giving his commandment, Jesus goes on to declare that " whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Here, then, we have a man who either knew nothing of matters of sex, a man in whose life sex had no part whatsoever, or we have a man whose life was so full of sex that it transformed him into a rampant prohibitionist. We accept the former of these alternatives. In either case the implication of his words is false, as every normal man knows. The appreciation of womanhood by man invariably expresses itself in sexual desire. There is, however, a great difference between that desire and the fulfillment of the desire. The one is perfectly normal and makes a man an interesting personality. The other ultimately makes a man a gluttonous beast. It would be difficult, indeed, to differentiate between " lustful looks " and any admiration that the human male feels for the female. Since man is risen from the animal he will inevitably be affected by one of the fundamental animal instincts, but since man is above the animal, he will, unless he is a weakling, control that instinct. The moral character of a man is not determined by the lack of desire but by the way he controls his desires. If the words of Jesus are to be accepted as our moral code, then a man is not to be praised for overcoming temptation. He alone is praiseworthy who does not experience

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temptation. The man who has a desire for intoxicating liquor and who resists that desire deserves no higher commendation, indeed not as great commendation, as the man who has never experienced such a desire.

Let us apply this teaching of Jesus to a specific case. A young woman with high ideals and excellent mental attainments marries a man whom she has been led to believe her equal in these matters. After marriage she discovers that her husband is in no way fitted to be her mate. He provides for her physical needs so far as food, shelter, and clothing are concerned though even in other physical needs she finds herself disillusioned and dissatisfied, while spiritually and mentally she finds in him no companionship whatsoever. According to the teaching of Jesus these unhappily mated persons are to remain husband and wife " till death do them part." This splendid young woman must continue to be chained to the side of a man whose association can mean nothing but the destruction of the finest things that she feels and knows. Her personality must be sacrificed because she has happened to say a few words while she was in utter ignorance of the character and personality of the man whom she has taken as a husband. Modernists are pleased to declare that the religion of Jesus encourages the highest development of human personality. The teaching of Jesus is against such a conclusion, at least in the case we are considering.

No one can justly criticize Jesus for expressing his very candid opinion on the question of divorce. We could only wish that he had dealt with other issues as definitely. But certainly this particular teaching of Jesus does not meet the problem which is presented in our modern life.

Let us consider another important problem presented by our twentieth century life. We are terribly confused in our economic relationships. Our economic life is based on private property. Is that a true basis of life? If it is not, what shall we substitute for it? Should the state take over all the means of production and distribution, or should it take over some of these means and leave others in the hands of private ownership? What is the correct relation between employer and employee? What wages should a worker receive? Should the man who does no work receive great sums of money for his idleness while the man who works receive only that which makes possible a bare existence? These are among our most vital concerns today, and upon the answers to these questions hang not only our physical and mental well being but our moral welfare and progress as well. What help can we get from Jesus on these matters? We have a few instances in his life which show that these problems which trouble us today were also troublesome problems to the people of his time. On one occasion a rich young man came to him asking the way to life, and Jesus told him to sell his property and give the proceeds to the poor. We hesitate to believe that his answer was intended as a solution for the problem of poverty, but if it was we do not hesitate to say that it was a foolish suggestion. On another occasion we find Jesus saying, "If a man take away thy coat, give him thy cloak also." Is this a prohibition against defending one's property? If we were foolish enough to try to apply these two commands to the life of today we would soon discover that such an application would imperil the very existence of practically everything that appears to be of value in our civilization. Leading students of the question of charity are unanimous in the opinion that giving to the poor simply augments the problem of poverty by making men become professional mendicants. And even under the most Utopian of economic systems it would remain necessary for a man to protect and defend his possession of some things which are peculiarly private property.

We look upon the man who refuses to provide for himself and his family as unworthy the respect of honest men, and we call the man " who hath not where to lay his head " a tramp; yet this was the condition which Jesus counseled his disciples to aspire to. " Take no thought for the morrow." " Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." " Consider the lilies of the field. They toil not neither do they spin." Do not work. Do not provide for the future. No man could keep his self-respect and obey such a code.

Jesus has been presented to working men as a " friend of labor." There is a reason for this. Christian leaders who have witnessed the growing dissatisfaction of labor with the church have adopted what they have called a " social gospel," though there seems to be no justification for this action in the words of Jesus. It is interesting to learn what Jesus had to say about the relations of employer and employee. Directly, of course, he said nothing on the question, but on one occasion he told a story that deals indirectly with the subject. Like most of his parables, this one leaves us in doubt as to just what he did mean to teach. The fact is that whenever we read the parables of Jesus we are reminded of Æsop's fables which are made to mean things altogether different from that which was in the mind of the writer of the tales. The story or parable to which we refer clearly shows Jesus' attitude toward the wage earner. A grape grower went out to hire men to work in his vineyards. Early in the morning he found men waiting in the market place for some one to hire them. He employed them and sent them into his vineyard. At noon he hired others, and at about an hour before quitting time he hired still others. At the end of the day he paid them each a penny. Naturally there was a dispute about the wage scale. Those who had worked through the heat of the day very properly felt that they ought to receive a higher wage than those who had worked but one hour and that in the cool of the evening; but the employer declined to see the justice of their demands. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own money?" Then he went on to call them selfish and to praise himself as a generous employer. There is no comfort for the laborer in that story. We do not know exactly what Jesus intended to teach by it. I have heard ministers say that Jesus was using satire, that he held up the employer to ridicule by stating the position so baldly. Maybe he meant it that way, but there is no proof that he did. Jesus does not explain the parable either on the occasion of its utterance or later to his disciples in private. The story itself contains no condemnation of the position of the employer. The position of that employer is not unlike the unjust employer of today. " My money's my own, and I'll do what I like with it, and it's none of your business."

The enlightened attitude of our modern times is that great financial power is a trust. This position is not that of a few liberal persons merely, but more and more the business men are coming to regard their positions as that of public servants. The writer is acquainted with a few men who have great financial resources, and it is not exaggeration to say that he has found some of them to be as greatly interested in projects of a social welfare nature as in their own business affairs. Among working men there is an increasing determination to have a share in the control of business, and leading sociologists do not hesitate to say that some adjustment that will bring about a larger labor representation in the control of business will have to be made. But here, as elsewhere, in the teaching of Jesus there is not the slightest intimation that the labourer should have anything to say in the settlement of the conditions under which he labors. Indeed, we find a definite prohibition against defending one's rights or trying to improve conditions that have become intolerable. "Resist not evil." "If a man compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Do not rebel against injustice. Take what comes to you without complaint.

Perhaps the greatest problem in the modern world is that of international relations. For hundreds of years nations that have fallen into disagreement have had recourse to war. An appeal to arms has been made whenever a nation has felt that it has been insulted, or whenever it has felt the need of increasing its territory, or whenever it has realized that in order to maintain its supremacy it must have control of certain natural resources which chance to lie within the territory of other and weaker nations. The excuses for war have been multifold, though in every case the nation has appealed to the patriotism of its citizens. In ancient days nations were very frank in making this appeal. If one nation wanted the resources of another nation, it appealed to its citizens frankly. It let the fact be known that it wanted the possessions of its neighbor, and the citizens threw themselves into the effort to obtain those possessions. The doctrine that he who has the power has the right to take that which he needs for expansion, originating among the robber princes, became the law of nations. But in more modern times, these real motives for war have been hidden, and other "reasons" have been advanced. Under the influence of propaganda, citizens have enlisted in the effort to obtain what their nation desired.

At last this problem of international relationships brought the world to a place where all thinking men understood that in modern warfare no one is victor and all are vanquished. War became a horror. It came to be recognized as the great destroyer. It was well known that in the path of war lay defeat for civilization. In this situation, let us turn to the teaching of Jesus for help. What does Jesus say about this question?

We have had an excellent chance to know what Christianity has to say about the question. When the Great War broke upon us we found a church confused as to what Jesus taught. A few ministers preached against war as being opposed to the ideals of Christ. Others found that the teaching of Jesus permitted war. Each of the great nations concerned in the war was a Christian nation. Ministers of Jesus Christ preached in the pulpits in the various combatant nations. The same words were read by the minister in Germany and Italy as in England, France, and America. Yet the nations went to war. Among the ministers there was no agreement. One minister took his stand on the fact that Jesus was the "Prince of Peace." He claimed the prophecy of Isaiah as an announcement of the coming of Jesus and, on the basis of that prophecy, he proclaimed Jesus as an enemy of international conflict. Another minister took his stand on the fact that Jesus had said that he came to bring a sword, and he urged a "holy war" against the enemy. One preacher reminded us that Jesus had said that we are to love our enemies, while another reminded us that Jesus himself went into the temple and drove out the evil priests and cursed evil doers. He, therefore, held that we too were justified in driving out the evil leaders in the enemy nations. Perhaps most ministers recognized for the only time in their lives that in this situation the words of Jesus held no solution to the problem. The point is that Christianity did not help us in this emergency. Certain ministers have been trying ever since the war to defend Christianity against the attack which I am merely repeating in these paragraphs. The most ingenious of these defenses is that given by Dean William R. Inge in his essay, "The Indictment against Christianity." Here he explains that Christianity was never intended to take part in the affairs of this world, that it held an ascetic ideal, that it taught men to be aloof from worldly things. This is an excellent defense, and it quite completely absolves Christianity from any blame in connection with the war, but it also condemns Christianity as meaningless for our times. In protecting Christianity from blame in connection with the war, it grants the fundamental contention that this chapter sets out to prove. If Christianity is intended to play no part in the affairs of this world, it obviously becomes exactly what we have called it, an escape mechanism, and as such it fails to be adequate to the needs of today. The commoner defense was that of Bishop Gore who said that Christianity has not failed because it has never been tried, to which defense

Graham Wallas responded, " A religion which has been accepted for twenty centuries by the leading nations of the world and has not been tried is a religion that has failed."

We have, then, in Jesus a man who was indifferent to all the really vital relationships of life, a man whose attitude may be correctly expressed by the phrase — escape from the realities of life. It is in the light of this attitude that we must re-examine all his words. *Why* did he teach indifference to the relationships of life?

He who would learn the meaning of Jesus' teaching must examine his conception of " the kingdom of heaven." It is quite possible to isolate a single statement of the prophet and make it appear to mean whatever one would like to have it mean, and this is precisely what superficial students of his teaching have been doing for many years; but it is a very unsound basis of examination and yields nothing of real value. Such statements as " Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," and " Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God " may mean anything at all if they are taken from the general context, indeed, they have been made to mean whatever the interpreter has wished them to mean. The " pure in heart " are those who agree with the interpreter. But when the key to the teaching is used, these texts can mean only one thing. And that key is " the kingdom of heaven."

In one of his later conversations with the disciples Jesus tells exactly what he means by the kingdom of heaven. We find here no grand generalities such as are to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. Here are concrete statements. The kingdom of heaven is to be an actual kingdom on earth in which Jesus himself is to be king. The coming of this kingdom is to be heralded by mighty upheavals in which those who " follow " Jesus are to be saved while those who have refused to follow him are to be " cast into outer darkness." According to Jesus, this kingdom was very near at hand. There were those who stood about him who would not see death " till the Son of Man be come in his glory." It is because this kingdom is so near that all the relationships of life lose their importance. If this ideal government is to be set up within the life-time of those who stand about Jesus why should they be distressed about the oppressions of the government in which they are living? Why take thought for the morrow? Why lay up treasures? Why complain about the conditions of labor? Why resist present evil? Soon all these discomfitures will be abolished and a new government under the leadership or kingship of Jesus will be established. Opposition to the existing government is unnecessary and absurd.

Of course, that conception of government does not meet with the approval of thinking people today. The government which Jesus conceived of was never set up, and if it had been it would meet with scant notice in our democratic times. Years ago I heard a Christian bishop declare that the most ideal form of government would be an absolute monarchy with Jesus as king. He presented this ideal government as if it were an original idea with himself. I can understand how a bishop might reach that conclusion, but I cannot see how any thinking American citizen who has been trained to accept the ideals of democracy could welcome the introduction of such a government. The fact is that we have left monarchical ideas behind. They do not fit into our present age. There are certainly faults in democracy which must be corrected, but the cure for democracy is not the substitution of autocracy.

Whatever the dangers of democracy may be, the light is ahead of us, not behind us.

It is a curious fact that while Modernists profess to accept the teaching of Jesus, they decline to accept Jesus' conception of the kingdom of heaven. They interpret this kingdom to mean a thousand different things not one of which was in the mind of Jesus. To the argument which has been presented above as to Jesus' idea of the kingdom of heaven, they object that Jesus himself denied any such conception. They thumb back in the Bible till they come to the story of the Temptations. Then they exclaim, " Look at this! Here Jesus dealt with the very questions which you have in mind, and he rejected the idea which you say he courted. If you are right why did he not accept the throne at the very beginning? " They go on to point out what Jesus said, " My kingdom is not of this world." But they overlook the fact that there is quite another possible explanation for these words, an explanation which actually fits into the picture of Jesus as an earthly king.

It may be doubted that Jesus ever had the opportunity of accepting a position of king. That he *thought* he had such an opportunity cannot be denied. If the story of the Temptations is authentic — and there is considerable doubt on that particular point — it is clear that the idea of temporal power as king occurred to him. That there was the desire for such power is undeniable, else there would be no real temptation but only a sham, a ruse practiced upon his credulous disciples. That desire was felt by Jesus when he went up to Jerusalem. But something occurred which showed him the impossibility of achieving his purpose. Perhaps he had never realized how strong the Roman government was. Back in Galilee the Roman power was not so influential or rather it was not so noticeable. Its power became evident only when one had come into contact with the life of the larger city. Here the power of the Roman government overwhelmed him. He knew that he could not cope with it. The account of his decision found expression years later in the beautiful story recorded in the fourth chapter of Matthew.

At the trial in Pilate's Hall stood a man who actually had rebelled against the empire. He had been seized by the Roman government and cast into prison. He was a fellow prisoner with Jesus. His name was Bar Abbas. History has been most unkind to that young Jew. It has called him a robber, but the fact is that among the Jews Bar Abbas was a hero, evidently a greater hero than Jesus, since they chose him rather than the prophet. Bar Abbas led the people to demand a government of their own. He insisted that the Jews be free from Rome. Jesus had the same dreams. Every Jewish boy entertained that same dream. But Jesus was unable to bring himself to lead the rebellion. Rather he hoped for supernatural aid. He failed. " My kingdom is not of this world " may be an interpolation, or it may be an example of what the psychologist would call defense mechanism. It is more probable, however, that it was the expression of Jesus' eschatological dream, conceived after he saw the impossibility of establishing his earthly ideal government.

It is, of course, perfectly obvious that Jesus' eschatological dream is of no value to us today. That dream has been one of the greatest reactionary influences in history. Man has been taught to endure whatever evil exists because the time is coming when he will be rewarded by the bliss of heaven. Since we are here dealing with the position of the Modernist, who himself rejects this idea of the kingdom of heaven, it is not necessary that we consider this interpretation.

In the present chapter we have been trying to show that Christianity in its Modernist sense, is inadequate to meet the needs of modern society. Orthodoxy with its refusal to accept the results of scientific investigations and with its other-worldly view is obviously impossible of application in our modern world. Modernism, with its half-way measures, its clinging to the teachings of Jesus which are not only so confused as to be impossible of understanding but which, so far as we are able to understand them, are of no assistance to us in the solution of our problems, is equally valueless.

✓ The best that we can hope for from Christianity is to be found in that which can be culled from the sayings of Jesus. We can take these beautiful words and gain inspiration from them. They, then, become exquisite literary gems, the reading of which tends to strengthen our lives. But in order that we may be able to do this we must divorce the words entirely from the prophet. To illustrate what I have in mind here let me speak of other great religious prophets. There are many beautiful sayings among the words of Buddha and Mahomet which aid us in building up our lives. But when we read these words we do not think of the prophets who uttered them. There is a beauty and a value in the words themselves. If we can read some of the words of Jesus as we read the words of these other prophets we may be helped by them. In this way alone is Jesus of any value to us today.

In a similar way Marcus Aurelius and Plato and Emerson are of value to us. Every great writer has given us thoughts which, if we read them intelligently, will create within us nobler ideals. But this is not at all what Modernists mean by the slogan "Back to Christ." They have in mind something much more personal, a loyalty of man to man, an enrollment under the personal leadership of Jesus. All this becomes meaningless when we study the record of the life of this proposed leader. It is impossible for us to place ourselves under the spiritual leadership of a man whose spirit we cannot learn and whose manner of life is confusion to us.

Many of the facts with which we have been dealing in this chapter have been recognized by Christians, although their deeper implication — namely, that the whole philosophy of Christianity is without value — has not been admitted. However, all along the journey, Christians have been unconsciously confessing the very fact that we have been developing, namely that Christianity is inadequate. The confession has taken the form of efforts to save Christianity from dying. When Luther decided that there was something vitally wrong with the Catholic system, something so wrong with it that it must be changed, he began the long line of confessions of weakness, and he set an example that led inevitably to disintegration. His was the hand that caused the first leak in the side of the vessel, and since his day the ship has been gradually sinking. It is today almost completely submerged, in spite of all the efforts to keep it afloat. Each new attempt at expressing the ideals of Jesus has been a confession of defeat for the institution which, prior to that moment, had been accepted as being the organ of such expression. The latest of these efforts has been the Modernist movement.

In the next chapter we shall observe some of the other efforts that have been or are being made to save Christianity.

## *IV. Efforts to Save Christianity*

THE student of religious history finds a condition today that is almost identical with that which obtained in the fifteenth century. At that time Catholicism had risen from its insignificant beginnings to the position of a world-wide religion. With increased power and prosperity came also arrogance and indifference to the real needs of the community at large. Christianity performed a real service for the people of the early Christian era. It gave them a new view of life; it revealed to them a realm over which Rome exercised no power; it was a liberating influence; it gave wings to the imagination; and it encouraged opposition to the power that dominated the world. It was because Rome recognized in it a force hostile to her own dominance that she at first sought to stamp it out beneath the feet of her gladiators and finally absorbed it in her already accepted philosophies. But in the fifteenth century Christianity performed no public service whatsoever. The church had become a self-centered, self-sufficient institution which maintained its sway over the public mind by the fear which it inspired, a fear made possible by the submergence of the common people in superstition. But gradually this fear fell away from some of the leaders and they revolted. These new and for the most part self-appointed leaders set out on the uncharted seas of theological controversy. They were met by the dialectics of the defenders of the old faith. Gradually the reformers gained a hearing, and new sects began to spring up in many places. Soon the reformers were reduced to the practice of the same intolerant measures as those which they had condemned in the Mother Church. If the Catholic Church burned Huss as a heretic, John Calvin performed the same distinguished service for Servetus, and for the same reason; and if it was wrong for the Mother Church to practice such intolerance, it was not less wrong for John Calvin to follow her example. Reformed religion rose to power, and it, too, became arrogant and indifferent to the needs of the community. The eighteenth century marked the beginning of our modern reformation. We are today nearing the end of that which Voltaire, Hume, Gibbon, Diderot, and the rest began. Just as Catholic Christianity of the fifteenth century failed to meet the needs of the people of that century, so Protestant Christianity has failed to meet the needs of the people of our own time.

This modern reformation has resulted in the formation of two distinct groups. There are those who have broken with Christianity altogether because of its sluggishness of mind, its refusal to accept the new scientific attitude, and its insistence on looking to a man who lived thousands of years ago as the sole teacher of truth. Advancing knowledge in history, science, and psychology has become if not altogether hostile, certainly quite indifferent to Christianity. There is a second group to whom Christianity is just as unsatisfactory as it is to the former group. This group, though not by any means as significant as the other, is made up of a larger number of people. Its adherents are just as hostile to science and progress as orthodox Christians are, but they find the older religion inadequate to their needs. Their objection seems to be not that Christianity is superstitious but that it is not superstitious enough.

It is not my purpose to consider at length the various sects that make up this second group. Indeed, their variety and multiplicity make it impossible to deal with them in detail in the scope of this book. The interested reader may find in Mr. Gilbert Seldes' *The Stammering Century* a splendid treatment of these sects. I mention them here only because they constitute a series of definite efforts to save Christianity. In each of them there is an implicit confession of the inadequacy of Christianity. They must, therefore, be considered in the search of a modern man for a satisfying religion.

During the early part of the nineteenth century America was the scene of a great flood of revivalism which was a reaction from the work of the deists, and which had its inception in the violence of Jonathan Edwards and in the evangelist enthusiasms of the Wesleys and Whitefield. This ferment ran the whole gamut of excitement and hysteria from these beginnings down to the cults and sects of our own time. There was Mormonism with its Joseph Smith and Brigham Young; New Thought with its Quimby; Perfectionism with Noyes as its controlling spirit; Spiritualism with the Fox sisters and their cracking toes; Matthias with his bathing women; Dowie with his City of Zion; and Christian Science with its much married prophetess. There were experiments in communistic communities, free love, bi-sexualism, and celestial marriage. Every shade of fanaticism was represented, and each professed to accept the Bible and the tenets of Christianity — *plus*. It was in the *plus* that these sects found their reason for existence.

The Christian church made war and still makes war against these cults, though it appears to overlook the fanaticism of "Billy" Sunday who strongly reminds us of those early revivalists whose specialty was "jerks."

As a matter of fact, these cults followed the teachings of Christianity to a logical conclusion, just as did Tolstoy when he left his family to become an ascetic. Spiritualism is merely the logical extension of the doctrine of immortality. If the doctrine of immortality is true, why should it be thought incredible that the souls of the departed should communicate with the living? Where is the departed soul? Christianity asserts that it is somewhere, but it does not say where. Spiritualism merely supplies that answer, and it does so on the basis of Biblical authority. According to the record, Moses and Elijah appeared to Jesus and the three chosen disciples and *talked with them* on the Mount of Transfiguration. Jesus, too, returned from the grave and *talked with* the Twelve. If the prophets could return and talk with Jesus and the disciples, why should the Christian church consider it an absurdity for the souls of our departed to talk with us from the land beyond the grave.

Perfectionism, too, was simply an extension of the teaching of Jesus who commanded that his disciples be perfect " even as the Father in heaven is perfect." It is a bit of plain logic that if Jesus is to be accepted as our spiritual guide, then we have the right, nay, we have the duty of following this command. The Perfectionists and the " Holiness " people of our own time are merely being logical.

Mormonism bases its peculiar doctrines on the Bible, and there is nothing in the words of Jesus that prohibits plural marriage. St. Paul, it is true, says that a *bishop* should be the husband of one wife, but he does not say that the ordinary Christian should have only one wife. On another occasion he expresses the opinion that it would be better for all men to be as he, himself, was, that is, a celibate; and on that statement many a cult including the Catholic Church has based its doctrine of celibacy. St. Paul thinks of marriage simply as an avenue of escape from fornication, and here, too, the Christian church has followed his instruction.

Christian Science, also, is a logical extension of the teaching of Jesus. Its most prominent practice is that of healing the sick and restoring sight to blind eyes. It has not yet raised the dead but we may look for that miracle to happen when Mary Baker Patterson Eddy returns, as many of her followers declare that she will. Now if Jesus and his disciples healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead, why should not his present-day followers perform these same mysteries?

The fact is that every sect and cult, even the most fanatical, has established itself upon the basis of the Bible. But the appeal to the Bible does not weigh heavily with the modern man, not because he has thrown the Bible away but because he brings to it the same attitude of mind that he brings to every other kind of writing. The Bible represents to him not a special revelation from God, but a collection of the writings of men who were trying to set forth their thoughts about God. As such it certainly contains errors, and since it was written thousands of years ago, it can scarcely be thought of as presenting the latest knowledge in any field. Thus, to the modern man, the statement that this or that is found in the Bible is merely the statement of a fact which may or may not have any meaning or value to the life which we live today, but which certainly gains no special authority because it is in this particular collection of writings. Whether the statement which is in the Bible is of value to us or not must be determined by an appeal to experience.

It is not necessary to spend very much time in an investigation into the values of these many cults. When Christianity has been examined, and when these cults are understood to be, as they certainly are, off-shoots from the parent stem, all that is needed is that the criticisms which are made of the parent be applied to the offspring. The modern man can find no satisfaction in these cults. He observes them; he sees that they represent confessions of the inadequacy of Christianity; he finds that they merely extend the doctrines of Christianity. He rejects the extension along with the original doctrine.

Perhaps the most obvious confession of the weakness of Christianity — and the one place where it appears to be quite conscious of that weakness — is to be found in the many movements toward church union which we have witnessed during the past few years. The Roman Catholic Church is admittedly the strongest part of Christianity. It has been said that if the Catholic Church were destroyed, it would carry down in its fall all the Protestant churches, and there is probably a great deal of truth in that statement. The Catholic Church is strong because of two reasons: its centralization of authority, and its universality. Whatever divisions may exist within the bosom of the Mother Church, that church presents to the world an unbroken front. It has thus far successfully resisted the fatal blunder of division. The Reformation taught it one important lesson — to settle its internal disputes within its own body and thus to avoid disruption. Protestantism, by the very nature of the case, was prevented from learning that lesson, and it remains today what it was at the beginning — " a house divided against itself." Protestantism recognizes this to be true. For the past few decades Protestants have been trying to get together, thus far with very little success. By its customary process of rationalization Protestant Christianity boasts of this effort at union as an indication of strength. It hopes that the modern man will forget that which is at the bottom of the effort.

But the modern man has the strange faculty of trying to get at the roots of things, and going to the root of this particular thing, he discovers that the Christian churches found themselves losing ground. They found people gradually drifting away from their influence. They found themselves incapacitated for effective action. They set about seeking the reasons, and instead of cleansing the inside of the cup where the real decay was to be found, they began to polish the outside. There were two things that critics were saying about Protestantism. One was that its doctrines were out of date, the other was that it was all cut up into small segments. The first of these charges Christians paid no attention to whatsoever. The second they seized upon as a drowning man grasps a straw. They began to sing

> We are *not* divided; all one body we,
> One in hope and doctrine, one in charity.

But all the while they knew that what they were singing was false to the very core. They thought to save the situation by creating a sort of spiritual clearing house whereby, though still actually divided, they might at least appear to be working together. And so they erected a superstructure over the denominational stones and called this superstructure "The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America." Today, instead of — or rather in addition to — a hundred different confessions of defeat, we see one colossal confession of weakness and inability on the part of the Christian churches to make up their quarrel and unite in the service of their god. Here is a number of sects, each worshipping the same God, each professing to follow the same Lord Jesus who said, "One is your master and all ye are brethren," each "washed in the blood" of the same Lamb, each eating the body and drinking the blood of the same Atonement, each hoping for the glorious resurrection through the merits of the same risen Christ, and each looking forward to an eternal life in the same heaven, *yet* each confessing that in order to work together harmoniously in this life they must combine in a big business enterprise *entirely outside the churches themselves* instead of burying their trivial differences and joining in one solid and organically united body. What a stupendous confession of the inadequacy of Christianity!

The modern man declines to accept this superorganization as a genuine evidence of progress.

When he examines the objections to " organic union " expressed by bishops, moderators, and other Christian leaders, he finds that these objections concern financial adjustments and ancient animosities. Two branches of Methodism, for example, remain separated because some of the publishing houses and some of the colleges would have to be sacrificed were the merger consummated; or they remain distinct because nearly three quarters of a century ago the one branch of Methodism chanced to lie south of the Mason and Dixon line while the other branch happened to lie on the northern side of that line. Thus the teachings of Jesus appear to be held in lower esteem than property values on the one hand and political traditions on the other.

In recent years we have witnessed another effort to save Christianity. Recognizing the absurdity of maintaining a number of churches in a given community, each attempting to do the same work and each doing that work in an inefficient way, Christian leaders have introduced the idea of united effort in " the community church movement." Until very recently this movement has progressed spasmodically. It has had no national organization. By its very nature, as originally conceived, such an organization has been made impossible. A town of, say, four thousand inhabitants has been supporting six Protestant churches. There is a Baptist church which believes in immersion; a Presbyterian church which believes in predestination; a United Presbyterian church which also believes in predestination but which does not believe in secret societies and which sings psalms instead of hymns; a Methodist church which believes in free-will, the glad hand, and the Anti-Saloon League; a Disciples of Christ church which believes in close communion; and a Lutheran church which believes in confirmation, consubstantiation, and which does not, at least whole-heartedly, believe in the Anti-Saloon League. In all these churches there are hard-headed business men who deal in money six days in the week and who go to church on Sunday and listen to preachers preach on "the poor ye have with you always" and "Blessed are the poor." These hard-headed business men, though they are rather dull of comprehension when thinking of the ever-present poor who are blessed on account of their poverty — and their docility, see very clearly the waste in supporting six churches with all the necessary "overhead." One church, they say, would work just as well and save a great deal of money. Therefore, they agree to unite in one body, notwithstanding the opposition of the ministers who see in the proposed union the disappearance of their " livings." What happens after the " community church " has been established? In the new church the minister faces a congregation composed of individuals who have been raised to believe in the old distinctions. What will he preach? Obviously he cannot preach all the old beliefs, nor can he single out any one of them and preach that. He cannot preach a " social gospel " for such a gospel is not popular with the hard-headed business men. He must preach something that will not offend. In desperation he falls back upon beauty and preaches light little essays whose chief quality is that they cannot possibly give offense to any one.

At the present time an effort is being made at greater cohesion among these " community churches." They have made application for membership in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. That, obviously, is the beginning of the end of the movement, since they now sink to the status of merely another denomination. The modern man sees in this movement no distinct step forward. The community church has not changed a single part of the old creedal positions. The best that can be said of it is that it recognizes the fact to which attention has been called in the first chapter of this book, namely, that there is no real doctrinal difference among the various denominations of Protestantism.

All these movements, the Modern man sees as clear confessions of the inadequacy of Christianity. The words of Dr. Kirsopp Lake, expressing the fear that the "house-cleaning" which Christianity needed would come too late, have proved to be a true prophecy. The movement of society today is distinctly away from Christianity. The modern man is not disposed to argue the question. He merely examines the situation, admits that Christianity has been of value in a former time, and passes on to discover, if he can, a religion which will do what Christianity has failed to do. He knows that there is a clear call for a new conception of religion, a practical religion which will deal adequately with the problems which arise in our modern complex world. This religion must arise out of the culture of the people. In the following chapters we shall try to discover a religion which, arising out of the culture of our modern age, deals not, as Dean Inge says Christianity was intended to deal, with affairs remote from life, but with life in all its richness and beauty and possibility of development as well as with its sordidness and cruelty and possibility of destruction. Before we do this, however, we must seek to know just what religion is essentially. To this inquiry we turn in the next chapter.

## V. What Is Religion?

THERE has been continuous controversy in our religious life. In a sense this controversy is, of course, just what we should expect. Religion has always been conceived of as a question to be settled by the individual. The man who would modestly disclaim any ability to speak with authority concerning science does not hesitate to speak positively about religion. Each man, whether he be a profound thinker or a very superficial thinker, a scholar or an ignoramus, feels at perfect liberty to differ with his neighbors, to form a new theory, or to start a new cult. The only requisite appears to be that of securing a following, and the very interesting fact is that there is always a sufficient number of people to accept the new idea and to form a new religious body. Thus, every year we see new cults and new sects arising. From one point of view this continuous controversy may be regarded as a sign of health. Nothing is more to be deplored than a static condition in any department of life. The deepest things of life are the things in which most turmoil may be expected. But the disturbances in our recent religious life are not of this healthy kind. Healthful disturbance in this realm would be the struggle to free religion from the entanglements with the philosophy of a by-gone day, and it will not be denied that there are to be found a few evidences of such a struggle, but most of the disturbance which we find is a struggle on the part of intelligent people not to free religion from its entanglements, but to free themselves from religion. Dr. Henry N. Wieman, in his *The Wrestle of Religion with Truth*, says,

> During the last three centuries religion has been losing ground. Fewer people are interested in religion and those who do take interest are less concerned than has been the case in many other periods of the world's history.

Today we have reached a climax. Intelligent people have become disgusted with the older forms and beliefs to such an extent that they have lost confidence completely in whatever goes under the name of religion. Such an attitude is indicative of growth only if it be true, as some critics aver, that religion is itself a disease.

A man sick with a cold is sometimes asked, "How is your cold?" when the questioner really means, "How are *you*?" and the sick man replies, "It is better," when he really means that he, not the cold, is better. The cold is really worse. It is losing its hold on the membranes of his body. Now, if religion is a disease, humanity, the patient, is better off today because the disease is losing its grip. But is it true that religion is a disease? Is it something that must be got rid of in order that humanity may improve? That a considerable number of people look upon the complete overthrow of religion as the only means of escape from the superstitions of the past will not be denied by any person who is informed of the state of our modern world. One writer of note assumes a very arbitrary position in this connection. He says:

> The future of civilization lies either with the religionists of the mystical type, in whose hands the clock of progress would be turned back; or else it rests with those who dare to proclaim themselves utterly free — rejecting not merely theology but religion itself — religion, the opiate and the escape mechanism.

Why not go further and say that the future of civilization lies either with the intuitionist psychologists or with those who dare to proclaim themselves utterly free, rejecting not merely intuitionism but psychology itself? or, why not say the future of civilization lies either with the Newtonians and Darwinists or with those who dare to be utterly free, rejecting not merely the doctrines of Newton and Darwin but science itself? The newer idea in all these modes of human behavior is merely a next step in their evolution. The "utterly free" folk give evidence of a woeful lack of imagination and a deficiency of historical and scientific sense.

President E. B. Garey, of St. Johns College, presents a better historical perspective when he says, "I question whether a religion born two thousand years ago in Asia is necessarily the last word for today." Aldous Huxley speaks an even more pertinent word when he says, "If we are ever to rise again from the depths into which we are now descending, it will only be with the aid of a new religion of Life." And Professor Sellars speaks with even greater perspicacity than all others. "Religion," he writes, "becomes a certain stage of culture, an expression which is bound to go on developing with culture and to find *new expressions* as time passes.'"

Perhaps the most pronounced example of opposition to all religion is to be found in post-war Russia. The Bolshevists hold that " religion is an opiate for the people." They declare that it was religion which to a large extent served to hold the people in bondage to the old régime. The priesthood, which was in league with the aristocracy, kept the people in ignorance and by holding them under the sway of the superstitions of the Greek Catholic Church, maintained the power of the czar and his fellow autocrats. The peasants, fearful of the condemnation of the church, remained silent if not acquiescent under the terrible lash of czarist oppression. Freed at last from the incubus of religion, they rose and threw off the shackles which for centuries had bound them to the earth. Condemnation of the czarist autocracy and of the Greek Catholic hierarchy, the ready tool of that autocracy, cannot be too strongly expressed; and certainly those who have read the preceding pages of this book will not be likely to accuse the present writer of attempting to defend the atrocities which were practiced upon the Russian people in the name of religion. But I raise the question whether the utter failure of the Russian church implies the failure of all religion; and I raise the further question whether the inadequacy of Christianity everywhere demands the complete overthrow of religion. The modern man has reached the conclusion that historic Christianity has failed; but is Christianity the only religion? It is the aim of this chapter to suggest the possibility of another conception of religion.

I am aware that my statement that the modern man has dispensed with Christianity will be met with resentment in some quarters. Certain prominent men will be referred to as representatives of the exact opposite of my contention. However, a more careful examination of the facts will show that all that has been retained of Christianity in these cases is the name. There has been an understandable hesitancy to cast away the name, but the fact is that the religion which masquerades under the name bears very little likeness to historic Christianity. The name is kept; the content is thrown away. Another type of modern man prefers also to cast away the name, and to face the future without the handicap of embarrassment that is inevitable in retaining a name which no longer holds any real significance.

In our attempt to answer the question which forms the title of this chapter, let us go back briefly to discover the nature of religion. To all but the most uncultivated minds it is well known that religion antedates not only Christianity but even the belief in gods. It is perhaps difficult for many of us to realize that there was a time when man had no gods. It would be impossible, I suppose, for a man like " Billy " Sunday to believe that such a time is actually to be found in human history. Sir Leslie Stephen refers to a class of men who " define the Almighty with an accuracy from which naturalists would shrink in describing the genus of a black beetle." Such men, if pressed for the reason for their precise knowledge, would explain that it is the peculiar province of certain people to receive that knowledge. These are the God-filled people, the inspired ones, to whom the Almighty reveals himself directly. To them God is very real. Others have a knowledge of God only through " faith." They believe that God is, because the inspired ones declare that he is. How does one become one of these inspired ones? By first accepting that which is to be believed, and then by " experiencing " it. There is, they admit, no external proof that God exists. The mystic knows, simply because he is a mystic. It is claimed that that is just exactly the way we all act in the realm of science. Not everybody understands the law of gravitation, for instance. Only a few men " know " this natural law; others accept it on the testimony of the scientist. This position is, of course, only seemingly true. It neglects certain relevant facts. One of these is that gravitation *demonstrates* itself. The scientist states the law. We hear, and ask for a demonstration. A ball is hurled into the air. We see the ball return to the earth. We measure the speed of the ball and discover that it returns to the earth with the same velocity that it had on leaving the hand of the thrower. We ask what law controls the movement of the ball, and the scientist gives us the law of gravitation. We accept that " dogma " until we find a better explanation. Then we discard the law very frankly *and so does the scientist.* Newton gives place to Einstein. But when we come to the religious field we find that our behaviour is quite different. The mystic tells us that there is a God. We ask for a demonstration, and no demonstration is given us. We find ourselves in a class with those who long ago asked for a sign and had themselves called a " wicked and adulterous generation " for their pains. Instead of giving us a demonstration, the mystic tells us that if we would know this fact we must become mystics, that is, we must believe in the fact without demonstration. That is the essence of mysticism.

The fact is that we have become so wedded to the idea of God that we seem to feel that man could not exist without some god-concept. A noted theologian, Dr. David Cairns, says that "it depends on a man's idea of God what kind of character he will develop." He makes that bold declaration in spite of the fact that many of the finest men in the world frankly dismiss all ideas of God, yet these men are as sober, as honest, as just, and certainly as intelligent as many men who have what this theologian and his brethren would accept as a true idea of God. The argument that man cannot live nobly without a consciousness of the existence of God is pure hokum practiced upon unintelligent men either to secure their support or to frighten them away from any real attempt to examine the facts. What are those facts?

William Jennings Bryan, in the heydey of his Chautauqua popularity, was accustomed to say that whenever anybody could furnish him with a record that "went further back than the beginning" of which the Bible speaks, he would give up the Bible and accept that record; but when the anthropologist did furnish such a record, Mr. Bryan declined to keep his promise. Mr. Bryan was a man of words rather than of ideas, and having made a pretty speech, he was contented. He dismissed the record offered by the anthropologist with the very profound statement that the Rock of Ages was more interesting to him than the ages of rocks. The modern man takes a different attitude. He realizes that the anthropologist knows much more about this matter than the superficial observer who allows prejudice and superstition to becloud his vision.

The Bible, of course, does not go back to the beginning, indeed, no one has been able to go back that far. Historians and scientists have been trying to learn something about the beginning for many years and without very gratifying success. But, although we have not been able to go back to the beginning, we are able to go far back beyond the Bible record. We are able to go back some forty or fifty thousand years, and when we go back even that far, we discover some very interesting things about the origin of religion. We learn that at the beginning of man's life on this planet he was not only not in possession of the highly specialized knowledge of God that Adam is said to have had but that he was a brute with no knowledge at all other than that of devouring his food and seizing his mate, that he did not even kill the beast which supplied the food but found it where it had fallen beneath the claw of its enemy and devoured that portion of it which had sufficiently decayed to make it palatable to his unsophisticated taste, that his delicate method of wooing his mate was that of dragging her from the cave of her brute-like father, who resisted or acquiesced according to the mood of the moment, which was determined by his feeling of hunger or satiety.

This primitive man, as James Harvey Robinson shows, had only the rudiments of a mind. Eating and sleeping, mating and fighting constituted his whole manner of living. With the dawn of intelligence, however, he found himself in a universe that frightened him. There was the thunder which made him sick at heart, the lightning which struck the trees over his head and hurled them to the ground, the earthquake which rocked the earth beneath his feet, and the flood which swept away his rude hut.

These things were mysterious and fear leapt into his heart at each new mystery. Behind them all he felt strange menacing presences which he sought to placate by prayers and sacrifices. It was the morning of the gods. The long climb out of these early fears from fetishism to monotheism forms the most interesting story in the annals of man.

Somewhere in man's religious development he began to experience a hope for immortality. This hope is not to be found in the earlier stages of religion. It is a comparatively late idea in the development of man. Even among the Hebrews, long after the adoption of monotheism, the idea of immortality was a very negligible part of religious thought. Sheol was a place for departed spirits, but the "ghost" was not thought of as *enjoying* its existence, and the living looked forward to life only after the adoption of monotheism, the idea of the enthusiasm that was manifested by the martyrs of the second century after Christ. Even in the day of Jesus a not inconsiderable company, called Sadducees, rejected the doctrine of immortality altogether. However, the idea of life after death had crept into being and had become a matter of hope and conviction. The reason for this is not hard to find. Life, as man knew it, was not a happy experience. It was filled with fear and pain, and man longed for a life where fear and pain would not be encountered, where his efforts would not be frustrated, and where his hopes would not be thwarted. His priests, being wise men in their generation who understood that popular control is maintained only by occasional concessions, encouraged him in this hope. They were not opposed to new dogmas so long as these new dogmas did not interfere with their power. They invented a code of morals which they insisted with many a " Thus saith the Lord " must be followed if man would be approved of God. Obedience to God's will, that is, to the code, would win for the obedient one eternal life in heaven; disobedience would consign him to everlasting pain. Man at once capitulated. He listened to the prohibitions that fell from the lips of the priests. "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not commit adultery." "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife." He enjoyed all these prohibited things, but because the priests held the keys of heaven and hell, he obeyed them. He began to live " the good life " here in order that he might inherit the happy life hereafter. The good life was associated with pain and sorrow; the happy life was possible only in a future existence.

We have, then, two new elements growing up in religion: a new objective — heaven; and a new method — living the good life as a means of reaching heaven. The older elements — escape from the anger of the gods through prayers and sacrifices — were not dropped; they were carried over into the new concept of religion, but added to them were the new objective and the new method. Throughout religious history thereafter these two new elements are to be found.

Religion is thus seen to be a growth out of fear and superstition to something finer and better. Certainly there is a vast difference between the beautiful conceptions of the Greeks and the fetishism and totemism of those far-off peoples who trembled with fear before every phenomenon in the natural world. Even though the religious implications are gone, we still read with delight the creations of the ancient poets who gave such charm to their explanations of natural events such as the changing seasons and the discovery of fire. Though there can be said to have been very little progress in beauty in religious thought since Christianity displaced Greek mythology, nevertheless, that Christianity is an advance over Greek mythology will be denied by few students of religion. The idea that is attributed to Jesus of a Father-God is a distinct advance over all the religions of the past.

Christianity, as we have seen, continues the old fear motive that characterized primitive man as he faced the mysteries of the forest. It continues to make religion an escape mechanism exactly as the Medievalists conceived of it. But whatever its crudities, it does present a nobler idea of God although it almost spoils that idea by other doctrines which rob God of loveliness. But if we can separate the Father-God idea from all the encumbrances of the doctrine of salvation we shall have the one and only contribution of a valuable kind that Christianity has made.

All these facts which we have been discussing in this chapter must be kept in mind as we try to learn what great thinkers have said about religion. I want to repeat a few of the definitions that have been given by these students of religion in order that we may arrive at our own definition.

Let us, however, first ask the man in the street what he thinks religion is. He will answer that religion is a belief in God and obedience to his will. His answer will differ very little from those which have been given by many great students of religion. Tylor, for example, said that religion is " the belief in spiritual things." Immanuel Kant defined religion as consisting " in our recognizing all our duties as divine commands." Edward Caird said " a man's religion is his ultimate attitude to the universe, the summed up meaning and purpose of his whole consciousness of things." To Schleiermacher religion was " a feeling of absolute dependence." To Hegel it was " the knowledge possessed by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind." James Anthony Froud held that religion is " a sense of responsibility to the powers that made us." Sir James G. Frazer defined religion as " a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life." Robert Marrett, author of *The Threshold of Religion* and one of the contributors to the article on "Religion" in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, divides religion into two parts: a sacred object, and the attitude of the worshipper toward that object. In expanding that idea he treats of the sacred object as being something forbidden, something isolated from ordinary life, *tabu* and *mana*, being the negative and positive aspects respectively of the sacred object. This idea of separateness has been the basis of many of the cults of ancient and modern times. Asceticism, which led to the monastic system, was an effect of this separateness of the sacred object, as were the cults of Perfectionism during the middle of the nineteenth century in our own country. The rights of ordination and conversion in the Christian church today appear to be continuations of this primitive *tabu* and *mana*.

With the development of our modern sciences, physics, sociology, psychology, and bio-chemistry, newer and clearer definitions of religion were expressed. John Stuart Mill touched upon this newer idea when he wrote, "The essence of religion is the strong and earnest direction of selves and is rightly paramount over all selfish objects of desire." But Mill was thinking of religion as it ought to be rather than as it actually was in his day. Matthew Arnold regarded religion as an attitude of devotion toward "a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." And Arnold, too, was reaching out to religion as a future achievement rather than as the religion which he found round about him at the time he wrote those words. The " power not ourselves that makes for righteousness " may be a power among men, a power of the mass, a social force, the pull of the whole group. Men are known to act differently when they are grouped together from the way they act as individuals. They are led by " the herd instinct." They are influenced by " mass psychology."

These are a few of the classic definitions of religion, and with the exception of those of Mill and Arnold each assumes the necessity of a belief in supernaturalism. Take away the idea of God and religion becomes to them impossible. The same is true of some very emotional people whom we meet in our churches today. A clerical writer, in a recent magazine article, is representative of this class. " Religion," he declares, " is a big, mysterious thing that blows upon the spirit of man in the dark, in the blazing sunshine, in the midst of perplexities." What absurdity that is! Emotion touched with idiocy. It is because religion is " a big mysterious thing that blows upon the spirit of man in the dark," that religion is reduced to a bit of foolishness. Religion is not a thing at all, neither does it blow upon man either in the dark or in the light.

One is tempted to retort that the only thing about religion that " blows " is the long-winded ministerial controversialist who employs emotionalism instead of common sense, and hysteria in place of logic, in the rationalization of his position. Of course, the thing that this writer and all others who use similar poetic outbursts forget is that modern man finds it increasingly difficult, if not altogether impossible, in the light of present-day scientific thought and discovery, to accept the idea of the supernatural. Everett Dean Martin, in his *The Mystery of Religion,* sums the whole matter up in a sentence: " The old supernaturalism, a reverie fabricated out of the wish to render our world more congenial to man, cannot without outside support survive in the workshop world of science."

There are, of course, many new definitions that spring out of the newer conception of man and his relation to his environment. One of these comes from Dr. Wieman, to whom reference has already been made. He writes:

> Religion is man's awareness of the realm of unattained possibilities and the behavior that results from this awareness. . . . Religion is a sham unless it involves critical, cautious, personal, experimental adjustments of one's

> whole life with a view to discovering how to live in harmony with the most sustaining behavior of the total environment. . . . Religion is not moral when it becomes so absorbed in the remote and cosmic possibilities of good and evil that it assumes no responsibility for the manifest goods of the various arts and sciences such as those to be found and promoted through association with our fellows, through industrial and political action, in the fine arts, scientific procedure, and so forth.

Dr. Charles Ellwood, in *The Reconstruction of Religion,* declares that religion " must be a set of practical attitudes toward practical problems." Edward Scribner Ames, defining religion as " the consciousness of the highest social values," says that " religion is essentially the dramatic movement of the idealizing, outreaching life of man in the midst of his practical, social tasks." And Dr. Sellars, in his excellent book on *Religion Coming of Age,* goes to the heart of the question of the necessity of a belief in the supernatural by asking

> What gives life significance? Does it secure its everyday meaning from relation to some unknown cosmic plan? Or does it secure it from the active pursuit of interests which demand expression? Life sustains itself by its drives and objectives and the satisfaction the furtherance of these brings. If interests wane, an individual is

bored and, as we say, life loses its meaning. Meaning involves linkage with desires and interests.

In our effort to form an idea of what religion really is we must avoid supernaturalism. In our examination of the older forms of religion the thing that stands out most clearly is that they have had a debilitating effect on mankind. They have taught him that he must not rely on himself. They have warned him against " good works," and have insisted on " faith." They have told him that he must depend on some higher power to help him meet his problems and perplexities. Religion has thus discouraged self-reliance. It has furnished an escape mechanism rather than an impulse to confront the difficulties of life with courage and a determination to become master. Dr. Wieman writes of this fact most interestingly.

> Religion is cherished chiefly for the illusions it provides, and such religion is a deadly poison. When a man is in trouble he wants to think that things are not as they seem; and this religion of illusion provides him with a fairy realm where all is beautiful and happy. . . . It is easier to dream that God will bring all good things to pass than to modify one's behavior in adaptation to the facts.

Christ did
not promise
a bed of
roses

Supernaturalism has played a supreme part in the religion of the past. So intent have men been on the questions of origin and destiny that other and more important matters have been utterly neglected. Why has this been true? There appear to be three reasons. The first of these is that the teaching of religion has been the exclusive province of a professional class. The medicine man among the savages retained his power over the tribesmen by the practice of certain rites and ceremonies which he alone knew how to administer. There were strange words to be spoken and mysterious motions to be performed. These sacred secrets were carefully guarded by *tabu*. Common men feared to intrude into the "holy of holies" or to touch "the arc of the covenant" or to speak the sacred name of the deity. All this, of course, took place centuries ago, but one has only to enter a Christian church to be transported back to those ancient days. There are still sacred secrets to be explored by him alone who has felt the "laying on of holy hands." Ministers are still set apart by a peculiar manner of dress. They still administer the sacraments. They still speak a peculiar language. And they are still tenacious of their ministerial prerogatives.

Professional
1.

More fundamental, however, is the desire of the people to escape the poverty of life. Life has been hard to most people. It still is. In the midst of adversity man has cried for help. Inspired by his priests, he has turned to God. The feeling that there exists a being who can help him in times of distress has given comfort which, if false, has at least stilled the passions and awakened hope. Man is never as religious in prosperity as in adversity. It is when he needs help that he turns to God, a fact that has been most welcome ammunition in the arsenal of the popular evangelist whose trade would be destroyed were prosperity universal. It cannot be denied that there have been times in human history when this hope has been of tremendous advantage to the human race. But those times have passed. Man today feels no assurance when he seeks the help of the supernatural. From the force of habit he may fall on his knees and cry out of the great pain of his soul, but he rises from his knees with the feeling that he has been betrayed into weakness and foolishness.

There is another reason for the preëminence of the supernatural in the religion of the past. This is the prominence of the philosophical attitude. Man has always been interested in the solution of certain great questions that concern his origin and destiny, and he has approached these questions from the point of view of philosophy. The very quality of mind which compelled him to ask the questions has led him on to discover a newer and better method of investigation, and though he has found no answer to these questions, he has discovered a method upon which he can rely. The philosophic attitude has been displaced by the scientific attitude. In times past philosophy has conceived of itself as a discoverer of truth. It has not waited for science to reveal the truth. It has attempted to show what is true with the hope that science would later on demonstrate the validity of its prognostications. Where it has had no knowledge upon which to base conclusions, it has not hesitated to guess, an activity in which science is not adept. Recently, however, philosophy has altered its attitude. It no longer regards its duty as that of taking up a problem where science confesses that it has no data. On the contrary, it accepts that which science reveals and it builds its structure upon these revelations. Man realizes today that if his questions as to the origin and destiny of man are to be answered, they must be answered by this latter method. That is to say, these questions, like all others, have been taken out of the hands of philosophy and placed where they belong — in the hands of science.

There is one more thing that we must avoid in making our definition of religion. Religion must not be conceived of as concerned chiefly with affairs that are foreign to everyday life. If religion is concerned with these affairs at all, it will be only as it affects the scientist. Religion cannot be something handed down from the skies, neither can it be something imported from foreign lands. The efforts of the Buddhist missionary in America are not more anachronistic than those of the Christian missionary in China. The religion which alone will satisfy the modern man will grow out of the culture in which we live. That Christianity does not fulfill this condition is obvious. It had its origin in a foreign culture, a culture that is thousands of years old. It thrives in an atmosphere of antiquity. It is musty with age. It is interesting only as an object of study to the historian or the anthropologist. As a practical guide to human behavior it has nothing to commend it to our time.

Is it possible, then, to discover in our own culture anything that we may call religion? Is it possible for us to formulate a definition of religion which will be acceptable to the modern mind?

Religion is, first of all, an attitude of mind. In saying this we are not making an original statement. The most determined reactionary will not differ with us here. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," and "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus" are texts which are frequently used by evangelists in the Christian church, and they are merely another way of saying, — Acquire a certain attitude toward No Christ and thou shalt be saved. One of the key words of orthodox Christianity is the word *conversion*, and conversion is primarily a change of attitude. It includes repentance, that is, sorrow for one's sins, but sin itself is an attitude. It is not merely a series of wrong acts. Righteousness, too, as defined by orthodoxy, is an attitude. It is not merely a series of right acts. Indeed, no idea has been more strenuously opposed by Christian teachers than that of salvation by good works. The fundamental doctrine of the Reformation was "justification by faith," and the reason for the insistence on this doctrine was the conviction on the part of the reformers that man cannot be saved by what he does. Later on the Unitarians fell under the condemnation of other Christians because they preached "salvation by character." The doctrine proclaimed by Christianity has been "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Certainly we shall not be opposed when we say that religion is, first of all, an attitude toward life. We shall meet opposition only when we go further and explain the kind of attitude which we have in mind.

What, then, is the attitude of mind which arises out of our culture and which must be the basis of modern religion? It is the scientific attitude. Man must come to regard every interest of his life from the scientific point of view. But the possession of the scientific attitude is not in itself religion; it is simply the basis of religion, for religion is more than an attitude. It is emotion as well. Therefore, the definition which will be accepted by the modern man must find a place for emotion. But religion must be something more than "life touched with emotion." If we may be permitted to use a homely figure, religion will be a team made up of the scientific attitude and the fine emotion of altruism. Religion is that attitude of mind and devotion of ability which, prompted by the scientific spirit, raises life's ordinary interests from means to personal gratification to means of creative living for all.

The word " devotion " is a word which we would like to avoid because it has certain connotations that hang over from the older form of religion. But what word can we use? We speak of devotion to our country, devotion to our families, devotion to our friends, devotion to our ideals. There is no confusion in these terms. It is only when we use the word in a religious sense that we face the danger of misunderstanding. Here we are understood to mean devoutness or worship of some sort. But when we speak of a man's devotion to his family we do not fear misunderstanding. That man labors for the family's welfare. He provides food and clothing and shelter for his wife and children. He protects them from assault. He is happy when they are joyful; he is miserable when they are harassed. It is precisely in this way that we use the word in our definition.

" Interests " also is a word which may be misunderstood. It, too, has an ugly connotation. In Roosevelt's time, war was waged against the " interests," by which, of course, was meant the great corporations that were said to be encroaching upon the rights of the people. As a matter of fact, religion has for too long a time assumed an attitude of devotion to the "interests" of this kind. It is scarcely necessary to say that we use the word in an entirely different sense.

Religion as we have thus defined it is an other-man-ness. It is an outgiving or outpouring. It is creation. The religious life is the creative life. It means expansion; it means growth. It is obvious that religion as we have it today means contraction and stagnation. It necessitates a withdrawal from the interests of man. It circumscribes man's interests. It misdirects them. If a man is true to his religion he merely tolerates the present interests. He *must* work, but his work means nothing but a process of getting food, or the money with which to buy it. As a religious man, his real interest is in a future existence. Real religion, on the contrary, brings man's attention back directly to the interests of everyday living. It fills work with enthusiasm. No man except a miser can grow enthusiastic over work as a money provider. The enthusiastic workman always has some further purpose. He refers to this purpose as " something to work for." Perhaps it is his family. Perhaps it is power in the world. It may be a thousand and one things, but it is not the mere attainment of money.

Religion is not the worship of science. It is not the worship of anything. It is a way of life, a way of living. It keeps to its own sphere. There is no battle between religion and science, that is, there is no battle until religion begins to tread on the territory of science. Religion has nothing to do No? with questions of origins and destiny. It is not properly concerned with the question of God and immortality. These are questions for the scientist to investigate. If there is a God, science will one day discover him. If there is not, science will ultimately dispose of the idea. We will await the moment of discovery with poise. But whether science at last comes to a positive or a negative conclusion will not concern us as religious men and women. If I were a Christian, and especially if I were a Modernist, I would be very restive under the continued work of the scientist for if a negative conclusion should be reached, all the sub-structure of my religion would suddenly crash, and I should be in the predicament of the man who built his house upon the sand. The humanitarian is after all the true conservative. He is bound to keep his house intact whatever may be the outcome of scientific investigation.

Religion is the motivation in the settlement of current problems. It is the urge behind social progress, as it is the urge behind individual achievement. When an artist paints a picture, unless he does it for the sake of the money that comes from its sale — and if this be his sole motive the work will scarcely be a production of artistic value — there is within him a driving power which carries him to heights of artistic expression. That creative urge is religion. Religion is the creative urge applied not alone to the painting of pictures but to the molding of a better civilization. Henry George, in working out a new scheme for the improvement of human conditions of living, is an artist and a religious man. Thomas Edison, in inventing the electric light, is an artist and a religious man. And so with all men who work for human betterment. Religion is the urge to social progress.

It is religion thus defined that Professor Ames has in mind when he writes:

What then is the goal of religion? Not escape from the natural relations, nor the repetitions of prayers and creeds, nor the cultivation of communion with ideal beings of the past or of celestial realms. The goal of religion is the fulfillment of the normal duties and opportunities of life as we experience it with sympathy and idealism and passionately unselfish devotion.

All human history has been a search for a social and rational religion such as we have defined in this chapter; but man has been blinded by the fancied presence of gods and by creeds which have dealt in subtleties. Before his very eyes has lain the thing he has been seeking, but save for a few clairvoyant individuals here and there, man has turned to superstition instead. He has been " God-intoxicated," and in his inebriated condition his sight has been double. He has never seen life singly.

Before closing this chapter I must call attention to an injustice that the critics of humanitarianism are wont to do their opponents. During the late war an easy method of disposing of a debate about the ethics of war was to call your opponent a Bolshevist. That immediately settled the issue in the public mind. The same tactics are apparently approved by the opponents of humanitarianism. They dispose of the humanitarian by calling him an atheist, and there you are. Now, an atheist is one who denies the existence of God, and certainly an increasing number of people are doing that thing. These people however are just as dogmatic and just as unscientific as the Fundamentalist. But there are other people who simply take the ground that since there is no proof of God's existence, and since the existence of God does not matter to us in our daily lives, therefore, they are not concerned with the problem. It is more fair to call these people non-theists rather than atheists. The one term takes the whole matter out of the realm of conflict; the other brings men to the point of battle. The point is that these dogmas, whether true or false, are not essential to religion. The religion of the future will cut itself loose from all such impedimenta. It will put things where they belong. It will let the scientist take care of questions such as — Whence came we? and, Whither are we going? And when science has given us its answer we shall then be ready to discover how that answer fits into our lives and activities here and now. Meanwhile we will confine ourselves to the interests of everyday life, knowing that here lies the field for real religious effort.

We here reach the end of the first part of this book. Let us attempt to sum up the search of the modern man for a satisfying religion. Our first endeavor was to examine historic Christianity. We found it to be a religion composed of a number of philosophies which once flourished in the region of the upper Mediterranean basin. During the first four centuries of our era the older philosophies were gradually losing ground. Intelligent men of the time had come to look upon them with a tolerant indifference. They spoke of the gods in conversation and wrote stories about them, but they had lost any real reverence for these gods. At this time a certain Jewish teacher named Paul was travelling about the country preaching a new religion which he had received in part from an obscure Jewish sect. He had studied the traditions of that sect and had discovered the fact that it lacked certain qualities which would make it of larger influence. Paul was a philosopher. He could not be content with the simple sayings of the followers of Jesus. He combined these sayings with other philosophies and formed the combination into a theological system. His effort was to make Christianity acceptable to the Greeks and Romans. He declared that what the

Greeks were worshipping ignorantly, he was prepared to explain to them. Thenceforward, the new religion was no longer a Jewish sect. Jewish rites were abandoned. Greek philosophy, Roman philosophy, the religion of Mithraism, and the Jewish sayings were welded into a new religion which we know as Christianity. In examining this religion, the modern man finds, first of all, a system so full of myths that it is interesting only as a relic of antiquity. Its spirit is so opposed to the spirit of modern times, so foreign to the nature of our thinking, that it is obviously of no use to us whatsoever. It assumes an hostile attitude toward science because its basic principle of "faith" is, as we have seen, undermined by the scientific attitude.

The recognition of the faults of Christianity is not left to outsiders. Members of the Christian church see these faults and condemn the older form of religion in very harsh terms. They offer a substitute. But when we examine this substitute we do not find a great deal of help in it. We see in Modernism a hesitant reaching out for real religion, but the effort ends in vagueness and confusion. Modernism no less than Christianity dares not to be on friendly terms with science. It talks the language of science very glibly, but it does not breathe the scientific spirit. Its voice is that of Jacob but its hands are the hands of Esau. Its basic principle is not knowledge but faith. Let us illustrate. What, for example, would be the scientific attitude toward the doctrine of immortality? The scientist enters upon his investigation without any personal desire as to the conclusions which he may reach. He is not interested in establishing a theory. He is interested in discovering the truth. Whether the conclusion arrived at is beneficial or detrimental to himself as an individual matters not at all to him. Furthermore, he will assume no position on the question until his investigation has assured him of the truth of that position. Till then he is a skeptic. His task is merely to collect all the data that can be discovered that has even the slightest bearing on the question. He evaluates the evidence, weighs the pros and cons, and fits each fact into a logical whole. If then he is convinced of either the truth or falsity of the doctrine, he announces his conclusion and gives the reasons that compel him to find that conclusion; and invariably he admits the possibilty of error, indicates the particular points at which that error may lie, and declares that he awaits further information which may fortify or completely change his conclusions. Now, is this the method and attitude of the Modernist on the question of immortality? Of course, it is not. The Modernist believes without investigation. His is an attitude of eagerness to receive the data which will establish his already accepted theory. He receives opposing evidence with reluctance, and whenever such evidence is revealed, seeks to cast all the doubt he can upon its trustworthiness. He meets opposing evidence with arguments which are presented in modern language, and sometimes his arguments are very ingenious. They almost mislead us. As one approaches a familiar scene from a new angle of vision and gazes at first in surprise and then in recognition upon the familiar territory, so do we approach these arguments. They have at first the appearance of novelty, but as we examine them more attentively, we find ourselves in oft travelled paths. The arguments are not new. They are as old and as true as a mirage, and like the mirage, they are the result of the overheated imagination of those who, for the sake of their own complacency, wish to prove that which stands already disproved at the bar of intelligence.

Our examination has shown us also that the fundamental plea of Modernism is impossible of accomplishment. We cannot " Get Back to Christ," for the record of Christ's life is so confused and his sayings so intermingled with the words of others that we can form no clear idea of what he said or how he acted. Furthermore, we have found that even if we accept the record, the teachings of Jesus are inadequate to the needs of our times. Therefore, the modern man must look further for a satisfying religion.

We come to see that if we are to have any religion in the future, that religion must grow out of our present culture. It must deal directly with the affairs of men today. It must not be an escape from the problems of life. It must deal with these problems effectively. Such a religion must, therefore, be scientific in its approach. Thus, we reach the definition which we have suggested. Religion is that attitude of mind and devotion of ability which, prompted by the scientific spirit, raises life's ordinary interests from means to personal gratification to means of creative living for all. In the second part of this book we shall try to apply this definition to the major interests of man.

# II

# *RELIGION FINDING ITS PLACE*

## I. *What Are the Interests of Man?*

WHEN fear walked out of the temple he took along worship as his companion. People no longer fear "the wrath to come." They have not settled this matter with any deliberate logic. They have simply dismissed it from their minds. The more educated among them have witnessed the conflict between the church and science. They have seen the demonstration of the scientist, they have heard the denunciation of the preacher, and the demonstration has been more convincing than the denunciation. The minister who wants a crowd — and most ministers do want a crowd with an almost ludicrous intensity — must abandon the old theological themes. He can no longer "hold men over hell till they sizzle" because men no longer believe in hell. Man cannot be frightened by myths in which he no longer believes. The boy, grown to manhood, loses his fear of a dark room. People are simply not interested in the sort of preaching which takes hell as a reality. Education has displaced credulity. The modern college and the modern high school have reduced " the old-fashioned Bible " and " the old-time religion " to absurdities. Men may sing about the old-time religion, but when they do, they have the same attitude that he has who sings one of the " blues."

The other night I called on a friend of mine who is an agnostic. I found him seated at the piano, playing and singing " Lead, Kindly Light." I asked him why he, an unbeliever in the philosophy of that hymn, should sing it with such apparent pleasure. He swung around toward me with a smile, and said, " It's a beautiful tune, isn't it? " That is the spirit in which many men attend church today. There is an æsthetic quality in the service which holds them. In other cases, the church is a sort of good-natured policeman.

A Jesuit was riding in the same seat with me on a recent trip from Washington to New York. We fell into conversation. He was a charming companion, a man widely read in philosophy and literature. In the course of our conversation he declared that his idea of religion was that it is a restraint over the uneducated masses. The great majority of people, in his opinion, are unable to govern themselves, and religion serves as a good governor.

On another journey I rode with an Episcopal rector. He stated frankly that he did not believe a word of the creed. To him all the doctrines, rites, and ceremonies were parts of a beautiful symbolism.

I attended a great New York church. By accident I entered the wrong door and fell into conversation with the gentleman who was about to preach. He had read certain articles which I had written and we discussed the point of view which I had taken. He apologized to me for repeating the Apostles' Creed which he said that he did not believe. Nevertheless, he entered the pulpit a few minutes later and preached a thoroughly orthodox sermon.

And so it is everywhere. There are thousands of people who retain membership in the churches to whom the religion of the churches is not an important interest. Many are members of the church because it is " the proper thing " to be such especially in the smaller communities. America has a population of approximately 125 millions of people. Of this number, certainly not more that fifty per cent are even nominally members of the church, and of these it is quite safe to say that not half attend the services with any degree of regularity. Religion, as we have it today, is not an interest in the life of the average American. What are his interests? Let us ask him.

The writer visited a number of small towns along the eastern coast of the country and endeavored to find out what men in these towns were interested in. He visited the small towns because he desired to avoid the criticism that would certainly have fallen upon him had he confined his attention to the city districts. The small town and the open country have been called the strongholds of Christianity. City people have long since drifted away from the church. From these conversations he found that the main interests of a man's life may be summed up under four heads: business, sports, politics, and education. Man is devoting practically all his time to these interests. He spends his day from nine o'clock in the morning to five in the afternoon in office or shop or farm. In the evenings he goes to the movies with his wife and children, or he goes to his club or lodge and talks " shop " with his friends. He awaits with eagerness the opening of the baseball season and takes his place with hundreds of other sweating, swearing fans in the grandstand to watch Babe Ruth " swat one into the bleachers." He sends his children to school and pays his school tax with less grumbling than any other tax. Once every four years he becomes a politician. He sits with his ear glued to the radio and hears his favorite candidate give a speech. He argues with friends and strangers alike on the necessity of putting " his " candidate into the Presidency. This is a true picture of the average American. From the year's beginning to its end religion forms a very insignificant interest in his life.

Now, as the modern man looks over this situation he wonders why ministers and Christian leaders, who seem to be concerned with the spiritual welfare of the nation, do not awaken to the fact that so long as they continue to lay stress on matters to which the great masses of people are indifferent, their efforts are like the wailing of the wind in the desert wastes. The chief complaint of the modern man against Christianity is that it is accomplishing nothing. It is a cathedral in ruins, admired by the tourist who, having visited it, passes on to the office, the athletic field, the theatre, the classroom, or the voting booth. The trouble with the older conception of religion is, of course, that it furnished an escape from these interests. Some of them it condemned. The Puritans and their successors frowned upon everything that brought pleasure to the human heart. The sign of a pious nature was a sour countenance. An actor was a bad man not because he had committed an evil deed but because he was an actor. No man could follow such a profession and remain a religious man. Young children were urged to resist the devil by abjuring " worldly pleasures." Religion consisted in living apart from the realities of life. Its most representative text was: " Come ye out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord thy God."

Religion, thus conceived, did not touch the interests of man. It thought of itself as simply one of those interests. A man might be unjust to his employees, he might resort to unfair means of competition with his business rivals, he might advocate unjust laws, he might participate in dirty politics, he might foreclose mortagages on widows and turn them out into the street, he might force a weaker competitor to the wall, but so long as he paid his honest debts, remained sober, did not become entangled in an "affair" with another man's wife, and was a member of a Christian church, he was accounted a religious man. He might even be a "pillar of the church."

The modern man, as we have seen, conceives of religion in an entirely different way. It is not an escape from life; it is an acceptance of life. Our trouble is that we have never studied the interests of man from the scientific point of view. We have conceived of them merely as the means to personal gratification. Man has worked for his family. He has looked upon sport as that which gives enjoyment to himself. Patriotism has been the love of country because it is "his" country. Education has been the means of fitting himself and his children to make money and to make it as rapidly as possible. In this respect, there has been no fundamental difference between the laborer and the employer save that the one is poor while the other is rich. We have heard much about the ideals of labor. It may be seriously doubted whether labor has any ideals. It is interested in exactly the same thing that those whom it regards as its enemies are interested in — getting money. A scientific attitude toward the interests of man would begin with a re-evaluation. It would raise these interests from means of personal gratification to means of social welfare. It would bring man to see his interests as media through which he may make contributions to civilization. We have regarded civilization as the creation of exceptional men, writers, generals, statesmen, financiers. The average man rarely conceives of his life as a part of the great life of mankind. He does not think of himself as a vital part of civilization in the making. Civilization is to him something already created upon which he may draw for a comfortable living. It is a sort of big bank account which other men have stored up. He makes drafts upon it for his own satisfactions but he never thinks of himself as one of the depositors. Therefore, man has come to undervalue his own life. He is insignificant save in his own small circle. Religion must step in and make him see the value of his own personality and the value of human personality everywhere.

It was this conception of man that Santayana had in mind when he said that " a reasoned appreciation of life is a religion even if there is in it no conventionally religious elements." It is this also that L. P. Jacks thinks of when he writes, " Religion is a power which develops the hero in a man at the expense of the coward in a man." It is this, too, that Edward Scribner Ames means when he says, " Religion has its place in the new order, not as something aloof but as something organic and integral with all other vital interests." The reason why men live selfishly is not that they are essentially interested only in themselves; it is because they see no opportunity for heroism in the common tasks of life. Life has become a very humdrum affair. They sink beneath the odium of uselessness. It is difficult to see any beauty or high value in cleaning the streets, gathering garbage, digging coal in a dusty mine, or running a subway train. Give them a war to fight and every drudge becomes a hero. The same tasks which are the humdrum duties of the lowest type of mentality become, in times of war, high duties the performance of which wins the praises of the multitude everywhere.

To escape the odium of uselessness and to give himself importance in his own eyes and in the eyes of his friends, man allies himself with all sorts of organizations. He becomes a Mason, an Odd Fellow, an Elk, a member of the Rotary Club, or a knight of the Ku Klux Klan. His wife joins the Daughters of the American Revolution, the local civic club, the Eastern Star, the Woman's Peace Society. There are thousands of illustrations, and each is an evidence that men and women want to escape the ennui of everyday living.

How is this desire to escape ennui and to become a real part of civilization in the making to be satisfied? Will it be satisfied by preaching to man the inestimable delights of the world beyond? Does it make man regard himself as of more value to tell him that he must school himself to endure hardships here in order that he may have eternal bliss in heaven? In other words, will the old theological attitude toward life solve man's present-day problems? That question we will carry over into the following chapters.

Religion, like the shepherd in the parable, has always stood outside the door. We have never permitted it to penetrate our everyday interests. When ministers have preached on business, we have raised the cry: "Don't mix business and religion!" When they have attempted to speak on a political issue, we have shrieked (is it in a frenzy of fear?): "Don't bring politics into the pulpit!" We have insisted that religion is a distinct interest, and we have used the term "a religious man" as though it were the name of a profession. The priest, the monk, the bishop, the preacher — these are religious men. But the adjective is not correctly reserved to designate a professional class. It is not a proper adjective. It is a common adjective. Peculiar manner of dress, strange words, and unusual intonations of the voice are not the true characteristics of the religious man. Religion is at last finding its place, and that place is not in the cloister but in the office, the shop, the school, and the legislative hall. In the following chapters of this book we shall attempt to apply this conception of religion to each of the major interests of man.

The question is often asked by those who are satisfied with the older idea of religion and who bend their energies to its defense, " Well, if you abandon Christianity, what will you put in its place? " They ask that question with the air of one who presents a " poser " and with a confidence that the question is not only unanswerable but that it will reduce all who attempt to answer it to confusion and embarrassment. It is perfectly legitimate, of course, to say, as many people since the war have been saying, that if Christianity has failed it should be cast aside whether there is anything to offer in its place or not. An institution that has failed after hundreds of years of trial has no right to bid for further acceptance, especially since the effort to keep it alive is doing a positive injury to society by retarding progress and by keeping man a slave to his inhibitions and repressions. However, such an answer offers, of course, no solution to the problems that surround us. If, therefore, another answer can be suggested, an answer that will offer something that is positive and not merely negative, we should feel the necessity of meeting the challenge that is offered us by supplying that answer. These chapters are frankly an attempt to supply that answer. It is quite clearly understood by the writer that this answer will not satisfy those who assume the attitude of stubborn objection to new ideas; but then, it is not intended for them. It is intended rather for the increasing number of men and women who have witnessed the failure of Christianity and who wish to find a better approach to the solution of moral problems.

## *II. Religion Finding Its Place in Business*

THE fundamental need of man is food. Long before man became interested in religion, he was a food-getter, and when religion came to be one of his interests, it was associated in his mind with food. The earth, which furnished his food, became a goddess; and the sun which caused the earth to produce, became a god. Man worshipped these deities, not because they had created him but because they supplied him with the means of life.

Out of man's need of food came also business. Reduced to its simplest terms, business is the way man obtains his food. He once went out into the field and worked with plow and harrow and reaper. Today he goes into the office, the store, or the factory, and works with telephone, typewriter, duplicator, rotary press, lathe, and other implements of modern labor. The relation of business and religion is inevitable, and all the efforts of demagogues in business, in politics, or in church cannot keep them apart. In the present chapter, I desire to consider this relationship.

Let me assure the reader that I do not propose to suggest a substitute for our present economic system. That is the task for the expert and we shall leave it to him, convinced that a little less tinkering by tyros and a little more of the application of genuine knowledge and skill by those competent to do the work is greatly to be desired. We are primarily concerned with economic systems only as they affect man's mental and moral life. I shall therefore speak in terms of attitude rather than in terms of economics, for I am convinced that our real need is a new attitude rather than a new system. Perhaps the new attitude will create a new system. Our primary interest therefore compels us to raise the question: What is our present economic system doing to us, to our ideals, to our personalities? Is it making better men and women of us, or worse?

A visitor to our shores stands in amazement before our great mechanical progress. He points to our fifty-storied business offices, our mighty factories, our great department stores, our roaring subways, and cries: "These are the greatest things in America!" He is wrong. The greatest thing in America is man, the creator of these stupendous achievements. It is, however, not at all surprising that our foreign friends should regard the material accomplishments of our country as the supreme facts of American life. We, ourselves, have become so calloused to real values that we look upon a skyscraper as being a greater achievement than a truly cultured man, and we pour millions into the making of a building while we dole out a few thousands to the making of men. Education must fight for a few dollars while business gathers without effort all the money it wants. It is fitting therefore that we should ask: " What are these things that awaken wonder in the minds of our visitors doing to us? Are they making us happier or more miserable? "

When I speak of a happy life I have no Utopian ideal in mind. I am merely thinking of that which is suggested by the words, " life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." I am quite willing to admit that the author of those words did not intend to say that every man is entitled to happiness. He doubtless thought of men as being divided into classes much the same as we find them today, though I feel sure that he would be shocked by the great contrasts which are to be found in modern society. It is also very probable that in using the words, " the pursuit of happiness," he was conscious of a distinction between the pursuit of a thing and the thing itself, though I am sure that by pursuit he did not mean a chase in which the pursuer never comes within sight of the thing pursued. But he did mean, at least, that each man in America should secure by his labor sufficient remuneration to provide for himself and his family the necessities of life. The principle of an adequate wage would surely have been acceptable to him.

Is the wage that is paid to the American workingman adequate? America is a prosperous nation. That was the campaign cry during the last Presidential campaign, and although opposition parties did their best to contradict it, they made little headway because from many points of view the slogan was the truth. America had become the world's greatest creditor nation. Her ships were to be found in every harbor and her investments were made in the remotest parts of the earth. Her workingmen received higher wages than they had ever received before, higher wages than the workingmen of any other nation received. Millions of her citizens wore excellent clothing, went to the movies, bought radios and vacuum cleaners, installed telephones in their homes, and rode about in automobiles. All these evidences of prosperity were discussed widely during the campaign. But there was one side of the picture which was neglected. Though the politician spoke in glowing terms of the high standard of living in this country, though he referred to the fact that many workingmen in America live in a state that would be regarded as princely by the people of certain countries of Europe, he did not refer to the equally important fact that this high standard of living creates many problems for the poor. The emotions of the father of the girl who spends her days behind the counter of a department store are not very different from those of the father of the girl who spends her days in a fashionable school. Each of them loves his daughter. Each wants his daughter to be happy. Each knows that if she is to be happy, the home must be attractive, and she must be able to dress in a becoming manner. But to make the home attractive and to dress the daughter becomingly necessitates an expenditure of a considerable amount of money. This presents no problem to the one father. To the other it multiplies the problems that are already too great to be borne. The one father is working on a comfortable surplus; the other is working on a minimum wage. This simple illustration may suggest that there is a great deal more in the subject of the standard of living than that which was developed in the late campaign.

The prosperity of a country cannot be correctly estimated by the amount of its exports and the financial condition of a few of its citizens. It cannot be properly estimated by the fact that the working people receive higher wages than they have ever received before. It is rather the distribution of prosperity that determines the state of the country at large. If we accept this as the basis of our investigation, we discover that America is prosperous only in spots. The fact is that there are millions of people in America who are living from hand to mouth. They may have excellent positions, their wages may be better than ever before, but they are compelled to live up to every penny they make in order to maintain the standard of living which is regarded as desirable in this country. If these people should lose their positions tomorrow, they would be compelled to spend weeks, perhaps months, in locating others; and if they happened to be above forty years of age, they would probably be compelled to join the army of unemployed which today numbers more than four millions of men. Consequently, worry lurks just outside the door of millions of homes in prosperous America. These people certainly cannot be called happy. They may be carefree so long as they feel that their jobs are safe, but once let a suspicion arise that a "lay-off" is approaching and they become victims of a terrible anxiety. No one has shown this anxiety better than Robert S. Lynd and Helen M. Lynd. In *Middletown,* that very remarkable survey of industrial conditions, they depict the constant harassment in which the family of a workingman lives. Here, for example, we have the pathetic cry of the wife of a worker who reached the age of forty-six:

> I worry about what we'll do when he gets older and isn't wanted at the factories and I am unable to go to work. We can't expect our children to support us and we can't seem to save any money for that time.

Another woman, speaking of her husband who had been laid off, said:

> We had been saving to buy a home but lost all our savings paying rent while he was laid off. We had to use up our savings to keep going. We had paid three hundred and thirty-four dollars on the auto and had just a

> little over a hundred to pay. We had been paying on the house a little over a year. My husband has just gone everywhere for work. We would have been out of debt now if he hadn't been out. It seems like a person just can't save.

It is, of course, impossible for people to be happy when they know that conditions like these are lurking in the shadows, ready to leap down upon them without any warning whatsoever.

A second requirement of a happy life is the assurance that enough money is being laid up for the inevitable rainy day and to provide for old age. Our treatment of old age is a disgrace. We are lazily passing on this problem from generation to generation. The parents work hard in order to provide the necessities of life for their children. When they are too old to work they become dependents upon their married children who already have responsibilities that practically exhaust their resources. In most cases, however, the children accept the additional responsibilities because that is the " expected " thing. The inevitable result of this arrangement is unhappiness for all parties concerned, for the children because they are already overtaxed with their own problems, for the parents because they cannot help but recognize the fact that they are dependents.

A third requirement of a happy life is that the work that one does shall be such as to engage one's interest. It matters not whether a man receives $10,000 a year or $50 a week, if the work itself is not attractive, he cannot be happy in that work, and he cannot be an efficient workman. Will an employer hire a young man who confesses that he feels no interest in the job other than the money which the job pays? Of course not, though the very next day he may argue with a fellow clubman that money is the only incentive to labor. There must be something in the work which not only inspires a sense of loyalty to the concern for which one labors but which assures him that through that particular business he is making a contribution to society as a whole. Herein lies the difference between our machine age and the age of handicraft. The shoemaker of old sat at his last and took a real pride in his work. There was in that work an evidence of his skill; the finished product was a demonstration of his ability. Every worker enjoyed a satisfaction in addition to and far superior to the money which he received for his labor. Observe the marks of workmanship on an antique piece of woodwork. One can easily imagine that craftsman with a smile on his face as he delivers the product of his handicraft to the purchaser, and one can imagine the respect which that purchaser felt for the craftsman. Where in modern industry can we find a similar condition? Perhaps in the inventor's shop or the chemist's laboratory. Charles P. Steinmetz experienced this high satisfaction. He loved his work. He was proud of his work. He knew that through his work he was making a real contribution to society. Money was not a consideration in his life. He died leaving only a small legacy, but he was happy. The vast majority of men have no such incentive. Bound with chains of steel to a machine which throws at them the half-finished product of other hands, they drive in a rivet and turn to the next half-finished product, to repeat again and again the same monotonous routine till they can close their eyes and do their work mechanically. They never see the purchaser of that which they have helped to make. There is no recognition of their ability. There is no sense of mastery, no consciousness of making a contribution to human welfare. There is only the terrible grind of the factory until the worker's mind and heart are ground into powder that mixes with the dust of the mill, a living illustration of those solemn words, " dust to dust."

Dr. Charles W. Eliot was once invited to address an audience of miners in western Pennsylvania. Dr. Eliot was one of the first scholars of his day. He was one of the most brilliant personalities in America. For many years he had been president of one of the world's greatest universities. His life was fruitful in rich contributions to the culture of mankind. He needed no hobby, for his work was both vocation and avocation. Filled with the happiness which sprang out of his work, he went to the miners and spoke to them on " The Joy of Work." They laughed at him. Dr. Eliot and the miner looked at work from opposite points of view. To the university president, immersed in ideals and inspired by daily contacts with developing personalities, labor meant creation; to the miner, immersed in the dust and dirt of the mine and brought into contact with a boss who cursed him if he failed to reach the maximum output for the day, labor meant nothing but drudgery. There are thousands of workers who, like those miners, find nothing but drudgery in their work. One economist estimates this number as at least five million. These men work because they must hold their jobs. The fear of the loss of employment chains them to unwanted tasks. If business is dull, these men face the terror of seeing their loved ones go hungry because they have been laid off or put on half time.

There is no appeal from the decision of the boss. Man, the greatest thing in America, is disposed of with as little concern as though he were a tool to be laid aside when no longer immediately needed, to be picked up again when the need arises. Meanwhile, the worry caused by his unemployment has robbed him of his efficiency. It has affected his domestic relations. It has raised problems which no future prosperity may be able to compose. It has impaired his health and weakened his endurance. It has interfered with the happiness of his children by taking away from them the opportunity of continued education. And there is no recourse whatsoever. If a burglar enters a citizen's house and robs him of his money, that citizen may have recourse to the law, and if he cannot recover his money, he may at least prevent others from suffering similar misfortune. If a train runs over a man and injures him so that he is incapacitated for further labor, he may sue the railroad and (if he has a good lawyer) secure damages. But if a business concern through its manager discharges an employee, upsetting his domestic life, stealing away the opportunity of happiness from his children, and robbing him of health, that man has no recourse whatsoever. This is the weight of fear under which the workingman of America labors.

We have now considered three fundamental requirements to happiness. There are others, of course, but they have to do with spiritual development rather than physical well-being, and the discussion of those higher requisites does not fall within the scope of this chapter. Confining our thought, then, to the conditions to happiness which we have treated, let us ask: What is our industrial system doing to promote these conditions? To answer this question, we must understand the nature of our industrial system. When we speak of industry today, we have in mind a very different sort of thing from that which our fathers understood as business. Business among our fathers was a friendly rivalry between two small concerns. A market price controlled the sale of commodities. The competition of today is not so simple. No business man of our time would reveal his ignorance of conditions by using a phrase which was common among our fathers — "Competition is the life of trade." Every well-informed man knows that trade today depends upon *combination,* and that such competition as we have is not by any means the friendly rivalry which obtained a generation ago. The competition of today is a war between gigantic corporations whose tentacles reach around the earth and grapple in China or Africa as terribly as in New York or London. Our industry finds itself compelled to adopt "high pressure salesmanship" which employs every art and artifice that will serve to induce, persuade, or compel the public to buy. To the old law of business, namely, keep the cost of production at a minimum and the price at a maximum, we have added another, "Educate the public," by which is meant create false demands. The philosophy out of which our industrial system is evolved is a philosophy of selfishness. It proclaims the doctrine of production for profits only, and it accepts the principle that "might makes right." It encourages the attainment of material success at the expense of the spiritual qualities. It grinds the noblest ideals into the dust and exalts the meanest and most despicable of human passions, the passion of acquisitiveness.

Youth gazes on this system and comes to accept as genuine the artificial values created by high pressure salesmanship. His judgment is warped. His prudential spirit is destroyed. He sees life in terms of extravagant desires to be satisfied at any cost. The great contrasts of society force him to accept the spirit of acquisitiveness as a virtue, and his program in life becomes, " Get all you can and get it as quickly as you can." Kindness, sympathy, and helpfulness are words foreign to his vocabulary.

It is hardly necessary to say that this system is ruining the home. The home is in the process of decay. The unprecedented divorce rate, the diminishing number of marriages, the changed conditions in home-life — all these point to the ultimate extinction of the home; and it is not difficult to trace this effect to its cause — modern industry. We may sum the whole matter up in a few words: business has become master and man has become a slave. The thing created has become greater than the creator. It compels man's obedience, and if he rebels, it crushes him. So must it be until man realizes the dignity and beauty that are his by reason of his being a man. The kingdom of heaven is, indeed, within us, but that inner kingdom is something entirely different from the spirit of submission taught by the early Christians. It is a kingdom of self-respect and respect for our fellows. Modern man may take a lesson from Hercules. That ancient hero struggled many days against Antæus without success. At last he discovered that the giant became weak only when not in contact with the earth. Then Hercules lifted him off the earth and strangled him in the air. It is the function of real religion to play the part of a modern Hercules, not in strangling the giant but in separating him from that false philosophy which gives him strength to become a tyrant and a destroyer.

Real religion would bring about a change in the objectives of business. It would cause the employer to recognize his true function. Employers would no longer exert themselves in the self-destroying effort to make profits. They would, on the contrary, see that their chief business is the development of the personalities of those who are their co-laborers, however humble those co-laborers might be. Nor would they do this simply as an act of altruism. They would do it as an act of mutual welfare, for it must not be forgotten that the employer does not escape the evils of the system which he now encourages. Such a system breeds heartlessness. It encourages the division of humanity into classes. It makes the employer feel that he lives on a superior plane and that the employees are of a lower order of beings; and such a feeling drags down the best part of the employer's nature while it reduces the employee to the status of a cog in the machine. No man can live nobly so long as he knows that others are living ignobly. Every criminal in our prisons is a stab at our own highest spiritual development. It is a principle of life that man cannot, without great injury to himself, divorce himself from the interests of others. Jesus (if it was he who said it) had this principle in mind when he told the rich young ruler to sell all that he had and give it to the poor. It was not that the action would benefit the poor, but that it would save the rich young ruler himself. The sickness of modern business is that it forgets this principle. Real religion would restore it, because real religion holds as the supreme value of life the personality of every man. The principle that modern business acts upon is exactly the opposite of this. It elevates the few at the expense of the many, and in so doing, it defeats its own ends. It sacrifices the highest in employer and employee alike to that which is base and mean. Business, penetrated by the spirit of the religion that we are considering, would not suffer fear to be the controlling motive in the lives of the masses of men.

The objection will be raised that such an attitude in business would mean the encouragement of incompetency. If men did not fear the loss of their jobs, they would not give their labor the attention which that labor must have. Such a view is surely very short sighted. It is true only if it can be proved that a worried workman is more efficient than a happy workman, and that, as every employer of labor knows, is false. On the contrary, worry destroys efficiency. Would you have a worried surgeon operate on your child? Is the best teacher for your boy the teacher whose mind is harassed by cares and disturbances? No matter where the principle is tested, it is always true that the best service is given by those whose minds are relieved of worry.

Make a man happy and his spirit will be reflected in his work.

We must safeguard ourselves against an error here. It must not be thought that real religion takes sides in the controversy between Labor and Capital. If it seems to do so, and if it appears to support Labor rather than Capital, it is because it is fed on the milk of human kindness. It springs to the succor of the oppressed as naturally as a fine-spirited boy springs to the help of a child in danger of being crushed by an automobile. But it holds no brief for Labor as against Capital. It beholds with equal pity the destruction of the spiritual beauty in both the oppressed and the oppressor. Real religion embraces all mankind. It sees in every man, however lowly, a beauty to be developed and it would recognize all the interests of man as the media through which that development may be made possible. It is the actuality of which the old adage is the symbolic expression, that " God is no respecter of persons." Instead of seeing the distinction represented in the text, " Man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart," it would endeavor to raise man to that sublime degree of penetration where man would become divinely clairvoyant. It may be that this new attitude in business would mean the establishment of a new economic system, different from Capitalism and different from Socialism, a completely new creative system. As to that we cannot say, nor are we particularly concerned with that possibility. What we are concerned with is that a new attitude be assumed by those in whose hands the power rests in this our day and generation. Of one thing we may be assured, that the only feasible method of social reconstruction, short of a revolution the results of which would be at least as destructive of personality as our present system, is the voluntary recognition on the part of those who now control our business world of their high duty as ministers to mankind. Real religion would restore the original meaning to the word *philanthropy*. That splendid word has come to mean the giving of charities. Philanthropy, thus understood, is merely a mental sedative used by men of great wealth to ease a mind disturbed by too large possessions. Such philanthropy blesses neither him who gives nor him who receives. The word has a nobler meaning. He is a philanthropist who loves his fellow men, who sees in each of them a beauty to be loved, and who knows that only as he helps to develop that latent soul beauty, does his own soul become beautiful. This is the high objective of the religion which we have been considering in this book, and this, I believe, is beginning to find its place in business.

## *III. Religion Finding Its Place in Pleasure*

IF you stand at Times Square and gaze about you at the brilliantly illuminated theatre district of New York City, or if you take your position at the entrance to Madison Square Garden and watch the thousands of people that pour into the arena, or if you enter a dance casino and listen to the jazz that pounds upon every nerve of your body, probably the last thing that you would think of would be religion, and yet, as a matter of fact, you would be in the midst of activities which in their origin were distinctly religious. The relation between religion and pleasure is, historically speaking, most intimate. Every form of pleasure that we enjoy today had its beginning in a religious ceremony. The theatre arose out of the choric dances in honor of Dionysus. Our modern sports began among the Greeks as parts of the religious festivals. Cards, though they reveal fair Saxon faces, may be traced to ancient Egypt, where they held a religious significance. Dancing has been a characteristic of religious ceremonies in every country on the earth.

In ancient times religion was conceived of as something to be enjoyed. The feast, characteristic of the pleasurable side of life, was also just as characteristic of the religious side of life. Feasts and fasts alternated, each representing a phase of religion. With the beginning of Christianity, however, the attitude of religious people underwent a distinct change. The Greek conception of religion as the complete enjoyment of life was displaced by the Christian conception of religion as a withdrawal from life. The earth-life became a very sad experience in which Christians must exercise the virtue of long-suffering in order that they might at last inherit an eternal life of joy in heaven. " He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

It cannot be denied that there were very good reasons for this new interpretation of religion. Among the Greeks and Romans, liberty had been reduced to license, and freedom to ferocity. The feasts became orgies and the games exhibitions of bestiality. From these extravagances of lust and brutality the more sensitive natures recoiled, and when Christianity appeared as a religion which prohibited brutality and lust, these gentle souls embraced it gladly. Through the influence of men like

Augustine, who had been most profligate in his youth and who because of the memory of his wayward youth substituted the philosophy of the endurance of life for the enjoyment of life, Christianity became a religion of self-denial. It was, of course, not difficult for the Christian fathers to maintain that this was the true interpretation of the religion of Jesus since here as elsewhere the teaching of Jesus is confused. It is hard to reconcile his doctrine of self-denial with his own conduct at the wedding feast, but there can be little doubt that most of his words set forth the necessity of abstinence, self-denial, withdrawal. At any rate, under the leadership of Augustine, Christianity became a religion of asceticism. The most devout person was the person who separated himself from all social contact, who lived in solitude. Saint Simeon Stylites who lived at the top of the pillar, and Saint Francis who shut himself up in a cell, were the ideal servants of the most high God. Out of this spirit of separateness grew the monastic system, the truest expression of Christianity that we have yet seen.

With the dawn of the Renaissance, the spirit of pleasure began to creep back into religion, but the Reformation interrupted its return, at least so far as Protestantism is concerned, and in another hundred years, Protestantism and Puritanism came to be synonymous terms. During the seventeenth century religion was practically devoid of every element of pleasure. If a particular act was regarded as pleasurable, that act was condemned as being "of the devil." In America, the rigorous nature of pioneer life led to an ever-increasing emphasis on this negative phase of religion. Puritanism reached its highest point of development among the settlers. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the religion of America was almost completely Puritanized. Children were as sober as judges, and it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that babes in arms discoursed on the beauty of the doctrine of the Trinity and the necessity of the dogma of eternal hell.

It was in this atmosphere that most of our modern "denominations" had their inception. Divided on every other point, they united in hating "worldly pleasure," and worldly pleasure included everything that people normally enjoy. Divided, they worshipped God; united, they hated the devil. Dancing, card-playing, theatre-going, and all other kinds of pleasure were placed beyond the pale by Christian leaders. Revivalists found their most forceful illustrations in the sinfulness of joy. Under their lurid word-pictures, eternal hell gaped wide open to receive those who walked in these forbidden paths. Dancing was synonymous with adultery; attendance at the theatre with debauchery; card-playing with rascality; and to do anything on the Sabbath Day except read the Bible, attend divine service, and meditate upon the holy life was a sure sign that one had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost for which there was no forgiveness. Great churches, such as the Methodist church, included in their requirements for membership a vow of non-participation in these worldly pleasures, and members who " fell short of the glory of God " by such participation were severely disciplined. So that, at last, all connection between religion and pleasure was broken off. The only pleasure that was Christlike was the pleasure of one's own misery which expressed itself in the old-fashioned " experience meeting " where " brothers and sisters " explained how happy they were to be sufferers with Christ, and rejoiced together in the assurance that if they suffered with him they would also reign with him.

Thus pleasure, the child of religion, was kicked out of doors by its parents and was adopted by those who had no interest in religion. Pleasure became a business. Every sport was taken over by some enterprising promoter to be exploited in behalf of the stock-holders. Dancing was shifted from the church to the casino; cards passed from the hands of the priests to those of the gambler; and the theatre took rank among the greatest business concerns in the world. Today everything in sports and amusements is completely commercialized, and for our frolic we pay fancy prices.

The characteristics of modern pleasure form a trinity which may well justify the Puritan position. The first person in this trinity is *thrill.* If pleasure is not thrilling, we will have none of it. The pleasure of quietness, of solitude, is a pleasure unknown in our times. Emerson was happy with a book, Thoreau with a shady spot far from the maddening crowd, but such delights are not for us of the twentieth century. We want action! We demand movement — rapidity! "Lots of pep and jazz" is the slogan of our age. We have become almost savage in our desire to witness exploits of great danger. In the movies some hair-raising escapade, such as a man tripping on the top of a sky-scraper, is required to satisfy us. If we go to a vaudeville performance we want to see how near an actor can come to breaking his neck without actually doing so. If he does break his neck, that, in the language of our generation, is " his bad luck." In the theatre the thrill is of a different sort, but it is still thrill that we demand. Here the actor must come as near as possible to indecency without becoming unbearably obscene, though the line is sometimes difficult to see.

It is not, however, difficult to see the effect of this kind of pleasure. The nature of excitement is that it creates a demand for more excitement. Thrills must be multiplied and new thrills invented until at last the possibilities of further excitement are exhausted and the pleasure-seeker sinks back into chronic boredom, his nerves shattered beyond repair. It is interesting if terrifying to stand in a public place and watch the people as they pass by. The strained, bloodshot eyes, the fluttering fingers, the trembling lips, the quick gait — all tell the story of " nerves." The last ten years have witnessed remarkable progress in medical science. The older diseases appear to be well under control; medical research has fathomed the secrets of their cause and cure; but the number of nervous disorders has reached an unprecedented figure. Psychopathologists, psychoanalysts, and psychiatrists flourish in every city.

The second person in this trinity is *extravagance.* Pleasure is not enjoyed unless it costs a pretty penny. When youth goes out on a holiday, it is not the quality of the performance that makes an evening a success; it is its cost. A single illustration will suffice, but what is true in this case is equally true in all. Go with the crowd and it will lead you to the prize-ring. Two brawny men fight for the world's heavyweight championship. The thousands of people — not only rowdies and gangsters as in a former day, but presidents of great universities, scientists of international reputation, and ladies of high social standing democratically intermingled with the backwash of lower East Side and Harlem — sit, tier on tier, about the squared circle. They have paid a million dollars to see that fight. In the great event in Philadelphia, the fighters received more than $500,000 each for *twelve minutes* of work, while the promoter made as much or more. Five hundred thousand dollars for twelve minutes of "work." Some men work *all their lives* in a coal mine where the hazards are at least as great as in the prize-ring, and notwithstanding that the work they do is essential to the very existence of mankind, receive less than fifteen per cent of this amount. The illustration calls to mind many things, but it is the extravagance that we are thinking of at present. We might have used the theatre as our example, or a hundred other means employed to give man pleasure. It would be the same. Extravagance is stamped indelibly on modern pleasure.

The worst member of this trinity is the last. Modern pleasure is not active but *passive.* It is something that is done to us rather than something that we do. It would not so much matter what pleasure costs if it made any genuine contribution to human welfare. The curious thing is that the pleasure which makes a contribution to human well-being costs little compared with the pleasure that we buy at such enormous prices. Eighteen men may meet in an open field and pair off in teams. From an initial expenditure of $50 they may provide the means for an entire summer's sport. From this sort of pleasure they may derive strength and health which will increase their efficiency in business and add greatly to their enjoyment of home life. On the other hand, they spend more than that amount in one afternoon at the ball-park. They leave the grandstand with nerves a-tingle. They are less fitted to do the work of the following day. They return home in a nervous condition which unfits them for companionship with other members of the family. There can be little doubt that much of our present unrest in the family life of America is directly attributable to the terrific nervous strain under which the members of the family live, and there can be no doubt whatsoever that our mad rush for pleasure contributes greatly to that nervous strain.

The pleasure trinity which we have been discussing has driven the modern, intelligent man to assume a position not very different from that of his Puritan ancestors. He finds it necessary to withdraw from the pleasure which he sees round about him. From another point of view, there is a great difference between his position and that of the eighteenth century Puritan. The Puritan of the earlier century held that people can be made pure only by *not* indulging in pleasure; the modern Puritan insists that people can be made pure only by indulging in pleasure. His complaint is that people do not indulge in pleasure; they merely watch others indulge. The pleasure that he sees about him is inimical to physical, mental, and moral heath. The eighteenth century Puritan objected to pleasure because it made people happy; the modern Puritan objects to pleasure because it makes people unhappy. The happiness that modern pleasure gives is the happiness of a drug, and, like a drug, it impairs the health, interrupts mental development, and encourages moral degeneration. It performs no service for anyone save the promoter into whose hands it pours enormous profits.

The whole pleasure program is irreligious, by which we mean something altogether different from that which our Puritan ancestors meant. To them irreligion was the refusal to accept the doctrines of Christianity, one of which was the necessity of practicing self-denial. Christ had commended, " If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." The Puritan logic is plain. If a man must practice self-denial, he must, of course, have something to deny himself of. The essence of self-denial consisted of ceasing to do that which he very much wanted to do. Therefore, any kind of behavior that gave pleasure should be taboo. We, of course, mean something altogether different from this. Religion has for its distinct aim the strengthening of human personality. Irreligion, therefore, is the practice of that which tends to break down or destroy personality. Pleasure, as we have it today, does destroy personality, and, therefore, it must itself be destroyed.

The reconstruction of the recreational side of life must begin with the question: What is pleasure for? what is its function? And there appear to be three answers. In the first place, pleasure relieves the tension of everyday life. It takes the mind off the cares that arise in business and professional activities. It awakens new interests. It furnishes an escape from routine, a particularly valuable function in a time like ours when so many men are chained to unwanted tasks. Holidays and vacations are necessary, and pleasure, even of a few hours duration — a night at the theatre, an hour with a favorite author, a dinner at the club, an afternoon on the links — is in the nature of a brief holiday. Again, pleasure is an avenue to culture. That, it will be said, depends upon the nature of the particular kind of pleasure that one indulges in, and yet it is difficult to think of any kind of pleasure that real religion would approve which would not be cultural. What, for example, could have a greater cultural value than a walk through the woods, or a ride through the open country, provided that one does not ride too fast? It was in such pleasures that men like Rousseau, Tennyson, Isaac Walton, Wordsworth, Burns, Audubon, Burbank, Whitman, Thoreau, and Emerson discovered a culture which is immortal. It is when a man gets away from the things that he *must* do and answers the call that reaches the depths of his being that he begins to comprehend what true culture means. The third answer to our question, and the greatest function of pleasure, is that it furnishes the opportunity of meeting our fellows in a new relationship. Man is a many-sided being. Meeting him in a business or professional way does not reveal to us his full worth. We must enlarge the area of our companionship with him if we would come to learn what he is. The various modes of pleasure secure for us the opportunity of enlarging this area of companionship. Friendships are rarely born in an office; they come rather of that more intimate relationship that is possible in the club, on the golf links, and on the hunting ground. These contacts enlarge the horizon of our vision, they draw out latent powers with which we did not think ourselves endowed, they reveal ourselves to ourselves, they cause our secret conceits to shrink and awaken within us broader sympathies and higher ideals. No man liveth unto himself. The hermit is a grotesque figure. In his silent hovel, he grows morose and mean-spirited. Communing with himself alone, he loses that broad view of life which makes his own life beautiful. He becomes a cynic, a miser, a spiritual dwarf. But when a man reaches out into other lives, when he enters into the joys of his fellows, when he becomes one with them in the friendly rivalry of sport, when he loses himself in the listening group under the spell of a master musician, he finds himself greater in heart and mind and soul. It is but another illustration of the words, " Whosoever loseth his life shall find it." Man *finds* himself not in isolation but in union with his fellow men. Christianity with its doctrine of self-denial and its inherent spirit of asceticism offers neither the solution to our modern problems of pleasure nor a guide to the development of personality. Its influence is negative, its effect stagnation. Real religion, on the contrary, appeals to the positive. It calls to man's highest self. It demands not that man withdraw from life but that he enter into life in all its varied associations and that he remold it. Therefore, religion finds itself in the world of pleasure as a condemner of its waste, its obscenity, its insanity, and it insists that pleasure become what it may become and what it should become — a medium through which man by meeting his fellowmen, by revealing his best to them, and by seeing the best in them may grow stronger in body, saner in mind, and more beautiful in soul.

## *IV. Religion Finding Its Place in Politics*

WHEN the student of religion speaks of politics he is on familiar ground, for originally the only kind of politics that men knew anything about was what we may call religious politics. The governing head of the tribe was also the head of the religion of that tribe. The chieftain, as the strong man of the tribe, made the law of the tribe by the power of his mighty arm. Brute strength alone was respected by the brutes who were our ancestors, and many phases of modern religion serve to show that religion has not altogether forgotten its brutish ancestry. It would be difficult indeed to deny that Christianity owes much of its success to coercive methods, and there can be no doubt whatsoever that many ministers of today would *force* the doctrines of the church upon the masses, a course of action from which they are prevented only by the intelligence of the people and by the institutions of our more democratic society. The Inquisition is not far behind us.

Later on, because the chieftain was compelled to go to distant parts of the country in order to meet his foes in battle, a subordinate was left in control of the religious life of the tribe. This subordinate or priest contrived to invent a certain magic and thus gained an ascendancy over even the chieftain himself. Thereafter there were two leaders, the chieftain and the priest, the former holding power by reason of physical might, the latter holding power by reason of cunning and magic. It was inevitable that these two leaders change places. Might always bows before magic when the hearts of men are ruled by superstition.

The next step was a return to unity with the power concentrated in the hands of the religious leader. Cunning usurped the place of might and became both priest and chieftain. That is, the government became a theocracy, a state of affairs illustrated in the history of Israel by the reign of Samuel, the prophet. The philosophy behind this arrangement was sound. Since divine law transcended the laws of men, the priest occupied a position superior to that of the temporal ruler. It was an easy transition from division of power to unity.

Throughout human history the problem here suggested has disturbed the minds of men in high position. During the Middle Ages the head of the church was in almost continuous struggle with the temporal lords. Each accepted a philosophy which in his own eyes placed his claim beyond dispute. The old philosophy that divine law is superior to human laws was emphasized by the church. Kings were but men in exalted position, and as such they were subjects of solicitude on the part of the Pope. They had souls to be saved, and salvation was of the church alone. The Pope was, therefore, ruler of the souls of kings. Since the Pope was in direct contact with God while the king had access to God only through the Pope, it was evident that on important matters the king must come to the Pope for guidance. On the other side there was a philosophy no less convincing at least to the king. Religion was a thing apart from ordinary life. The Pope should be relieved of all temporal responsibility in order that he might give his time and attention to spiritual things. To be saddled with temporal responsibility would divert his attention from these weightier matters. Besides, temporal things were worldly. They were unclean. The Pope ought not to besmirch himself with them. Did not holy law command that

Christians "keep themselves unspotted from the world"? How could the Pope keep himself pure if he were compelled to come into contact with worldly affairs? However sincere or insincere this philosophy may have been — and we may be excused for thinking that it was clever rationalization rather than an attempt to safeguard the Pope — history proves that the kings were excellent analysts. Popes have not always been unspotted from the world.

And so the battle was waged, sometimes in favor of the Pope, sometimes in favor of the kings. The question has never been settled satisfactorily to both sides. In 1870 the temporal power was wrested away entirely from the head of the church and the Pope retired to the Vatican, a "voluntary prisoner," emerging only yesterday from his self-imposed imprisonment because the Italian dictator, Mussolini, restored a small portion of the Pope's former domain to its original potentate.

In America the question of combined power has never been a source of trouble because of the peculiar nature of the settlement of the virgin territories. The pioneers who braved the terrors of the ocean in order to establish homes in the new world were actuated in part by a desire to attain freedom of worship. Early in their career as settlers they drew up agreements to the effect that church and state be forever separate. That settled the age-long problem so far as America is concerned. The rulership of the state and the rulership of the church became two distinct interests. Christianity had at last found the place suited to its dogma of asceticism. There was no reason for a monastic system since religion was at last a thing apart from life. Men did not need to retire to the cloister in order to avoid contact with the degrading influences of political life.

How does this program of separation work? What do we mean by politics? Politics is the technique by which a whole people act in unity. It is the way in which the will of the people is expressed. Does religion have anything to do with the expression of the will of the people? If religion is conceived of as theological — No. Then the old cry, "Keep politics out of the pulpit!" is justified. But if religion is conceived of as we are thinking of it in this book, if religion deals with the ordinary interests of man, if its function is to serve as the motivation in the settlement of current problems, then it must eventuate in political thinking and political action. We can no more keep religion out of politics than we can keep politics out of business, an effort which has been made as strenuously and as persistently as that with which we have been dealing.

We leave this question for the present to return to it later in this chapter, and give our attention to the state of political life today. That state has found expression in such a phrase as " politics is rotten," and there is not a little reason for that conclusion. Politicians are, for the most part, men of mediocre ability. Some years ago I had occasion to meet the Congressional representative of my district in the good state of Pennsylvania. Prior to that time I had viewed politicians from afar. I entertained the popular notion that a man who had risen to the exalted status of United States Congressman or Senator must of necessity be a man of outstanding ability. I had heard many a candidate for these offices speak at political rallies and I had often been disappointed in their speeches, but I had excused them on two counts: first, that a man might possess real ability in many fields and yet be quite unable to make a good speech; and second, that the candidate was probably " speaking down to his audience." Then I met *our* Congressman, the man who stood between us and the expression of our will as citizens, the man whose duty it was to interpret our ideals to the rest of the nation, and I was amazed at the low mental caliber of this public officer. He was a man whom I would have hesitated to employ in a minor managerial position. Yet I and my fellow-countrymen had elected him as the interpreter of our political ideals. Upon his vote rested in part the destiny of our country. His incumbency in the office of Congressman was nothing less than an absurdity. There were a hundred other men in the district infinitely better fitted to be the interpreters of our ideals, and I began to ask why these men had not been chosen for this important office instead of the obviously incompetent person who had won the election. I learned that there are many reasons other than that of fitness for office which serve to place a man as Congressman, and that indeed fitness for office not infrequently actually keeps men out of the positions. The State of Pennsylvania (and the condition was not in any sense peculiar to that state) was at that time under the thumb of a certain nationally known and nationally feared political boss who served his masters with a fidelity worthy of a better cause. The boss, himself a Senator, was a highly cultured gentleman who probably served his country as loyally as any of his confreres. I am sure that he would not have received the representative of our district in his home and I am sure that he would have been bored to distraction had he been compelled to engage the Congressman in lengthy conversation. But he never did that. He gave orders and exacted strict obedience to his will. His only masters were the business interests which kept him in power because he served them well. The fact is that we, the citizens of the district, were not represented in Congress at all. So far as representation in Congress was concerned we might as well have lived in Abyssinia. It was the business interests that were represented. Our Congressman was a mere figure-head. The law required that the office be filled, but in effect the office was vacant. We might have dispensed with the formality of electing an officer, closed the office permanently, and saved the money which we paid our dummy Congressman, and our government would not have suffered in the slightest degree. Obviously a person of initiative and force would scorn to accept a place so degraded and so degrading as that of Congressman under such a condition, and just as obviously such a person would not be selected by the boss.

Why do not capable men deliberately enter politics and wrest it from boss control? An easy answer would be that that is precisely what they are doing. There are certainly many evidences of the fact that men of worth are becoming increasingly interested in our political life. Boss rule is not so openly practiced today as in the days of Quay, Platt, and Tweed. To be sure, we still have Tammany Hall in New York City, and the Vare machine in Philadelphia, but such institutions are now on the defensive. However, the improvement has not yet become so conspicuous as that we may be led to boast of political purity. When we remember that only a few months ago an attorney-general was discovered in a very questionable relationship with men whose hands were stained with oil, and that one party to that relationship was sent to jail while another is making his home in distant parts of the earth to escape a similar penalty, and when we remember the recent mayoralty campaign in New York City, the tremendous vote of confidence for the machine candidate, and that candidate's open avowal of loyalty to the boss of New York politics, we cannot feel especially proud of our political situation. We have yet far to go. Political life has not yet attracted men of real worth in very great numbers. Are such men indifferent to the state of American political life? Not at all. They write books and magazine articles of criticism and suggestion. They serve on committees in civic societies. They give interviews in which they frankly express their condemnation of the present situation. Why then do they not go in and change the situation? They may be unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices which political life entails. They may not wish to hand over the conduct of their business affairs to others while they expend their own energies in the public behalf. There are doubtless a thousand and one other excuses; but at the base of all their objections lies the fact that they cannot depend upon the support of the average voter. The average voter is not dependable. He will not carry through a program of reconstruction. He may begin well, but he will soon back out and leave those who lead the fight to struggle on alone. When he comes to see that the battle is likely to be long and hard and that he may lose some personal advantage, he becomes a "quitter." This is due to two things: first, his training in permitting others to do his fighting and his thinking for him; and second, his lack of education. The average voter is not illiterate — though the number of illiterates discovered among the conscripted men only a decade ago was appalling — but he is uneducated. He has attended grammar school because the compulsory education law has made this inescapable. He knows how to read and write, but he does not know very much beyond these simple accomplishments. To follow a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages to the nation at large of a given piece of legislation is quite beyond his power. He is swayed by passion rather than by reason, by immediate and apparent personal and local gains rather than by far-reaching benefits to the nation. He is constantly at the mercy of the political trickster. An appeal to his emotions by a crafty henchman of the boss will outweigh the carefully reasoned conclusions of intelligent public-minded citizens. The word of the nimble-wit of the community carries more weight than that of the distant statesman, and it is for this reason that the political boss selects the nimble-wit as his henchman. Obviously then, real political freedom must wait upon the work of the educator. The average voter must be educated to see beyond his own back-yard. It is because he is not thus educated that the intelligent and public-minded citizen declines to make the inevitable sacrifices which political life entails.

Such a condition leads us to wonder if our proud boast of democracy is anything other than a hypocritcal pose. Howard Lee McBain, writing in *Whither Mankind?* is not alone in feeling that "the capacity of democracy satisfactorily to cope with the internal and external problems of peoples is already taxed beyond its apparent limit," nor is he mistaken when he adds that "candid and competent observers must admit that as to many of its larger tasks democracy is doing a poor if admittedly a difficult job." Although our platform orators always use the word democracy as though they knew exactly what it means and as though it were already man's choicest possession, the fact is that there is not on the face of the earth today and there never has been a democratic state, and furthermore, men are not at all agreed as to the meaning of the word. Democracy, we are told, is "government of the people, by the people, and for the people," but obviously we have never had just that. What we have had is government of the people by some of the people. Pure democracy is today, and probably always will be impossible of attainment. Is it possible to secure the agreement of *all* the people on any single subject? A small group of people with kindred interests and a common background may become a unit in thought and action, but that America's millions with their diversity of interests and their variety of heritage can ever be welded into unity is a fantastic dream, and, as a matter of fact, nobody ever expects such unanimity of thought. The utmost that we expect — even in theory — is a division of opinion in which a majority may honestly express itself, and we do not have even that. Notwithstanding that we have accepted as our working definition of democracy the phrase "majority rule," there is in practice no place in our government where the will of the majority is expressed. What we really have is the rulership of a powerful minority which works secretly through its carefully chosen representatives, winning its way because of the stupidity of the average voter. Legislation favorable to the minority is successfully engineered, and the public pays for its own stupidity by continued distress. Occasionally a sop is thrown to the masses as the circuses were given to the ancient Roman plebeians, and, gaining that, they think that they have political freedom. Government is by and for the powerful minority. It is that minority which has political freedom, while the masses have nothing but a pleasing sentiment to be aired by orators on public holidays. Political freedom, words full of sound and fury, signifying nothing!

Would the condition be improved if the will of the majority were in control? On the contrary, there is grave danger that it would be infinitely worse. An uneducated democracy is a menace to civilization. We have had a taste of control by an uneducated majority in the " monkey laws " of Tennessee. The domination of public affairs by illiterate and bigoted people is an eventuality toward which we could look with nothing less than dismay, yet the case which Mr. Bryan advanced in behalf of that domination was absolutely sound if frightfully insane. It ran about as follows: Taxation without representation is tyranny. The people pay the taxes for the maintenance of public education. Therefore, they must have the controlling voice in the disposal of the moneys so raised. If they decide that these moneys shall not be used in teaching evolution, they are well within their rights, and any other conclusion would be a denial of democratic procedure and would constitute tyranny. I repeat, that case is sound. If democracy is correctly defined as the rule of the majority — and that appears to be the only working definition — it follows that the citizen who does not agree in the proposed legislation must bow to the will of the majority or confess himself a heretic to democracy. On the other hand, of course, if he does bow to the will of the majority, he ceases to have a controlling voice in government although he, too, has paid his taxes.

The general condition which we have been treating has naturally enough called forth innumerable efforts at correction. Perhaps the most prominent of these is socialism. It is fitting, then, that we ask: Is socialism the cure for our political disorder? We must be excused for asking — Which socialism? for there seems to be as little unanimity of definition here as in defining democracy. There are, of course, the classical schools of socialistic theory, though the thoroughgoing socialist would inform me that only two of these great exponents of socialist theory, Engels and Marx, are accepted by modern socialists. My question, however, has nothing to do with this. My question is: Do you mean the thoroughgoing socialism of Marx or the mixture of various liberalisms including socialism which is held by some proponents of the cause today? If the latter is meant, then I have little to say on the subject for, as a certain Southern political leader said to me years ago, "We are all socialists now." He did not mean that we had all adopted Marxism. He meant that socialists were not distinguishable from other liberals. That was in the days when the senior LaFollette was attempting to reform the Republican party, and the socialists and other liberals were trying to help him do it. At the present time, I believe, such an attempt at coöperation is frowned upon in loyal socialist circles. I conclude, therefore, that by socialism is meant the Simon-pure article. Now, this sort of socialism is primarily an economic theory. It is political only in a secondary sense, and in its politics it does not differ materially from the political system which we already have. To socialists the democratic principle is valid. If this principle is at fault, the foundations of socialism, as political theory, are destroyed. Whatever may be the necessity for economic reconstruction (a subject with which we are not here concerned), and however excellent the reconstruction which socialists propose, the fact is that socialism has nothing to offer us on the issue of political reform. The significant controversy today concerns the principle of democracy rather than any particular application or adaptation of that principle. The condition which we face is that of an uneducated democracy. The masses are not able to govern themselves intelligently. They are incapable of using the power which they have, and yet the socialists propose to extend that power. The cure for democracy, they say, is more democracy. It would be just as rational to think that we could keep a boy from blowing his head off with dynamite by giving him more dynamite. The trouble is that he does not know how to use that which he has. The mere addition or multiplication of power would not teach the masses the correct use of power. What would occur, indeed what has occurred in Russia where the experiment has been tried, is that one powerful minority would be substituted for another powerful minority. The control of the masses has merely shifted from one bureaucracy to another. "The king is dead; long live the king!" The question, then, is not whether we prefer to govern ourselves or be governed by a minority; but whether we shall be governed by this minority or that minority? Socialism may be the logical step in economic reform — its adherents declare that it is — but something in addition to an economic reform is demanded, and perhaps if that something were supplied, the economic situation would correct itself. Certainly if political reform is not undertaken, socialism's economic program would find itself defeated from the beginning.

The other prominent effort at correcting the failure of democracy is Fascism. A few years ago, Benito Mussolini, a newspaper man of strongly radical tendencies, was doing his utmost to bring about the transformation of the Italian state from monarchy to socialistic democracy. Today, this same Benito Mussolini is the greatest dictator in the world, perhaps the greatest dictator in history since the First Napoleon. Why this remarkable change? There are always those who are ready to say that the reason why a man changes his political affiliation is that he sees a greater chance of personal advancement in leaving the old to embrace the new. It will be remembered that during the recent Presidential campaign in our own country there were critics who declared that Mr. Hoover had left the Democratic Party for the Republican Party because he saw that as a Democrat his chances of election would be less sure. Such criticism was merely a part of the " whispering campaign " which long before the termination of the campaign disgusted all intelligent citizens. If there had been any ground for criticism, no discredit would attach to Mr. Hoover, since no real change of mind was necessitated by the conversion. The terms " Democrat " and " Republican " are synonyms. But in the case of the Italian dictator a real change was called for. One can regard the premier of Italy as a twentieth century Napoleon seeking the main chance for personal power, or one can think of him as a sincere patriot who renounced socialism because he foresaw the futility of democracy and who adopted Fascism because he believed that Italy needed a strong, efficient government. He, himself, claims that this was his motive, and I, for one, am quite ready to accept the claim. The bitterest critics are, of course, the socialists who damn Mussolini and worship Lenin, but, as a matter of fact, there is little difference in effect between the Fascist dictatorship and the Bolshevist dictatorship. It is only in theory that they are as far apart as autocracy and democracy.

Would Fascism solve our problem in America? From the popular point of view in America the idea of dictatorship fills us with apprehension. Americans have been taught that this country was " conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." America became a land of " equals " when General Washington defied and defeated the autocratic George III. Since that day the words " autocrat " and " dictator " have been words that stir our fighting instinct. The politicians know this and play on these words in their attacks on one another. The average voter swallows the bait, hook, line, and sinker, and casts his vote for the candidate who can yell the louder. This being true, Fascism would not work in America unless it were set up and maintained by military force. That is, Fascism under that name would not be tolerated. But a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, or if you prefer, dynamite by any other name would be as dangerous. And the system which we have is not unlike the Italian system. The real difference lies in the dictator and in the manner of conducting the dictatorship. America is under the domination of a very small minority; Russia is under a similar minority rule; and Italy is really governed by a small minority, for it is impossible for any man to play a lone hand in government.

But we have not answered the question, for we have left out of consideration the most important element of present-day American life, namely, the work of the educator in public instruction. Since we shall have occasion to deal with this subject in detail in a later chapter, we shall pause only to say that whatever the faults in our educational system may be, America is becoming more and more a nation of informed and thinking people. The American youth of today is exposed to new ideas. He reads books and magazines which open his eyes to facts to which the youth of former times were blind. His hero is Lindbergh, the flyer, not Roosevelt, the soldier. His interests are widening and deepening. In high school, he is studying the social sciences instead of the ancient languages. It is not at all uncommon to hear a tenth grade boy discussing problems of governmental policy with his companions. In his debating societies he no longer confines his attention to questions such as "Was Washington a greater man than Lincoln?" On the contrary he considers such topics as “ What does the average American factory worker earn per week? ” and “ What are the courts doing to save the home? ” two questions selected from topics suggested by a nationally known periodical for the high school boy’s study. We are not ready for democracy, but we are getting ready.

This new attitude of youth is very interesting to us because we see in it the beginning of the application of real religion to politics. The youth of America are beginning to question the institutions which their elders have been accustomed to accept as a matter of course. When men begin to look questioningly at our political life, religion is beginning to find itself in politics, for the initial step in the religious approach is doubt that does not stop in doubting but that leads on to investigation.

What we have been trying to say in this chapter is that the average voter does not question the value of that which we have. He accepts the platitudes of the political boss and is driven about like a great lumbering dray horse. When he begins to doubt and to investigate, he kicks over the traces and finds himself no longer a beast of burden but a man.

The new attitude of youth calls for a redefinition of our political objective as an initial step in the application of science to government. If government is in behalf of big business, youth demands that this objective be clearly understood and that our national energies be bent toward that end without the subterfuge of concern about the public welfare. If, on the other hand, government is in behalf of the people, youth demands that it be conducted in such a manner that that objective be attained. The confused objective which we have today can end in nothing but inefficiency.

That government is not scientifically conducted is scarcely open to debate. Is it scientific to have as representatives men like the member from Pennsylvania? Would any business house in the country employ in an executive capacity a man who is obviously unfitted by intelligence and training to fill the position? Of course not. Therefore, we must either confess that our national legislature is less important than the business house, or we must admit that we are lacking in efficiency in this branch of government.

The weakness of our government is not in its machinery. All the tinkering with the machinery that we have been busily engaged in for the past few decades has made but little change in conditions. It is, indeed, impossible to alter the machinery in a very decided way, for here again we are confronted with our inherited democratic ideal. If at the beginning, the framers of our government had been able to foresee the dangers of the democratic system, they might have fixed stricter limitations on the electorate. Some of them did foresee these dangers and attempted to place checks on the freedom of the ballot, but democracy was already in the air and possessed all the lure and promise of a novelty. The spirit of revolutionary France found a ready reception in revolutionary America. The dangers of aristocracy were over-emphasized because of the struggle with aristocratic England. And those who entertained doubts of popular government were over-ruled by the ardent republicans. Since that time democratic power in theory has grown by a surprising procession of events. The Negro was no sooner given his liberty from slavery than he was provided with the right to vote though every one admits that he was in no sense fitted to exercise that right. Foreign immigration was enormous, and it was very easy for the immigrant to become a voter. The right of suffrage was granted to women few of whom possessed any qualifications for the exercise of the right. Step by step America added to her burden of unprepared voters. Today, it is impossible to make any radical readjustment. It is easier to grant the right of suffrage than to take it away.

Since, then, we cannot retrace our steps and by limiting the right of suffrage, cure the disease by preventing its cause, we can find an escape from the danger only by securing capable men and women as the officers of government. How can we do that? Curiously enough, the answer to that question has been lying ready before our eyes since 1802. It was emphasized in 1845, and has received re-emphasis again and again in our national history. On March 16, 1802, President Jefferson approved the bill establishing a military academy at West Point. In 1845 the Naval Academy was founded at Annapolis. Thus, for more than a century and a quarter, we have required that officers in the American army be specially trained for their duties, and for more than eighty years we have applied the selective process to the other arm of national defense. That is, we have insisted that those who take care of the nation in times of war shall be specially trained, while those who take care of the nation in times of peace are required to have no other ability than that of winning enough votes to secure election, and that not always by methods that will stand the light of publicity.

The statement that we have not applied the selective process to peace-time officers is not strictly true, for, as a matter of fact, we have done so in the case of our government employees in the Post Office and elsewhere through the Civil Service, and we have insisted that those who are selected for judicial office shall be men long trained in the law. But to our legislative and executive branches — more important by far than the judiciary since they affect the public welfare more directly — we have set up no standards whatsoever save the standard of personal popularity that expresses itself in an ability to get votes. The result is that while our army and our navy and our judiciary are, in the main, manned by men of outstanding culture and ability, the other branches are, in many cases, conspicuous for the mediocrity of their incumbents.

Is preparation for war of more importance than preparation for peace? Are the officers of the army and navy — who serve the country only at the rare intervals when the nation is attacked, which, if we are to accept the " outlawry of war " as anything more than a pleasing gesture, are to be less as time goes on — more important than those who make our laws? If not, obviously these peace-time officers should be men trained for their duties. It is not impossible to believe that we shall some day select our senators, representatives, governors, and presidents from those who have made government their special study. Then we shall find that politics will be a respected profession as law and medicine are today, and men will secure their training at the university instead of in the ward-heeler's back room.

It is not, however, my desire to attempt to teach political economy. I have tried merely to suggest, and that by way of a digression, what seems to me to be one effort to apply science to government. It seems perfectly patent that our present mode of selecting our legislators is most unscientific, and that a training school for civil officers similar to our West Point Academy for military officers would be a step in the right direction. It would at least give us intelligent, educated men in our state and national legislatures.

When we turn away from the national to the international situation, we discover to our great gratification that we are somewhat more scientific in this relationship than in the other. That is, we are beginning to think of the relation of nation with nation from a *personal* point of view. While we continue to speak of national politics in terms of " prosperity," we are beginning to think of international politics in terms of personality. In other words, we are becoming religious in our international thinking. Why do we want to " outlaw war "? We are not, of course, blind to the fact that here, too, there is the economic factor. Great commercial leaders are for the moment in favor of peace plans, although they are apparently still in favor of large and powerful military and naval forces to " protect our interests " abroad. But there is something else involved in the propaganda for peace, something without which the cause of peace would be infinitely poorer. War destroys mankind. Its toll in human life and happiness is appalling. The long list of fatalities in the World War has shocked us though we are not greatly shocked by the fatalities of our industrial life. We are not sufficiently shocked by these latter fatalities to question the efficiency and the morality of the industrial and political system which permits them, but in our international relationship we have reached the point of questioning the efficiency and morality of a system that demeans and destroys mankind, and we have begun to address ourselves to the international political situation in a scientific manner. We have asserted that war is immoral and that it ought to be made illegal. Our official spokesman, Mr. Kellogg, has entered into conversations with the spokesman of France, M. Briand, with a view to outlawing war. These conversations were advanced to the point of positive negotiations and a treaty was signed between these two nations. The rank and file do not yet know whether this treaty is anything more than a " pleasing gesture," but at any rate America has officially pronounced war to be immoral and illegal. If the treaty is only a gesture, it is at least a scientific gesture and that is an immense gain.

We are waiting for the next scientific proposal, and that proposal is on the horizon. While these words are being written, the newspapers are carrying the head-line stories of Ramsay Macdonald's visit to America. Mr. Macdonald has come to this country to discuss with the President the question of disarmament. How far this discussion will carry us toward disarmament, it is of course impossible to say, but certainly we are seeing progress, and any progress is another indication that we are thinking of the relations between nation and nation in a scientific manner.

" Patriotism is not enough," said Edith Cavell on the eve of her execution. " I must have no hatred or bitterness toward anyone." These are words of profound significance, but they are words that carry us scarcely far enough. Neither is the absence of hatred and bitterness enough. We have wasted altogether too much time and energy in the expression of fine emotions. Perhaps love would have avoided the World War; but assuredly good sense and wisdom would have done so. We need more love certainly, but we need love guided by wisdom. The fact that we must recognize is that wise preparation for peace will make war unnecessary. It is not as emotional pacifists that thinking men will approach this question. It is as men of scientific vision, and scientific vision, in accord here at least with real religion, demands that the means of peace be multiplied and the means of war destroyed.

But more must be done than merely to scrap munitions of war. The adoption of a scientific attitude toward the whole question of international politics is basic. Disarmament is merely a part of the *modus operandi.* The scientific spirit, like charity, begins at home. If we in America once adopt the technique of life suggested in our definition of real religion, we shall have laid the only enduring foundation for world peace, for war is only the extension of the doctrine of personal aggrandizement to international proportions. Real religion looks upon politics — national or international — as a legitimate field for action because politics has so much to do with the development and enrichment of human personality. When we come to see in political life not a means of enrichment to the few but the enlargement of the realm of happiness to every individual, we shall recognize at once the absurdity of international conflict just as we shall recognize the iniquity of the national impoverishment that grows out of an immoral industrial system.

It is because we are advancing toward the adoption of this scientific spirit that we know that real religion is finding its place in politics. Religion is beginning to inspire within political life a higher valuation of personality. We already scorn such a view as is represented by the phrase "cannon fodder," and soon we shall disavow with equal vigor the view represented by the words "factory fodder." It is the function of real religion to encourage this scorn and disavowal. Real religion would place man and his happiness above every other consideration, and bring the settlement of all problems under one law — justice and opportunity for all.

# III

# *RELIGION ESTABLISHING ITSELF*

## *I. Religion Establishing Itself*

THE title which has been selected for the present division will, I suspect, furnish not a little amusement for orthodox religionists. How absurd to speak of one of the oldest interests of man as establishing itself at so late a period of human history as this twentieth century! But if one speaks of Christianity as having established itself approximately 2000 years ago, no one laughs, yet there would be as good reason for hilarity in such a statement as in the statement that we have made, for, as a matter of fact, neither Christianity nor any other religion may be said to have established itself, since all religion is a part of a continuity which had its inception in the long ago when men stood trembling before the god of thunder. If, however, we are permitted to speak of Christianity as having established itself, we may also speak of this latest development in religion as doing the same, for, as we have seen, the religion of modern man is at least as different from Christianity as Christianity is different from the religions which preceded it. Humanitarianism, or secularism, as we may call this modern development in religion, is the latest step in an evolution in which superstitions have been progressively sloughed off, in which reason has displaced credulity, and the theologic spirit has abdicated to the scientific attitude. We shall leave the Fundamentalist to enjoy his little joke at our expense, happy that at last he has developed a sense of humor and hopeful that this newly acquired sense will lead him to see another absurdity, namely, the absurdity of expecting the modern man to accept Christian dogmas as anything other than delightful myths which tickled the fancy of the race in ages long past.

In the preceding chapters I have tried to show how religion, when taken out of the cloister and freed from the encumbrances which have grown around it as poisonous weeds grow about the stalk of a beautiful rose, affects or may affect the ordinary interests of men. The question that remains is: How can we achieve a religion of this kind?

The first answer, and the one to which we give our attention in this chapter, is education. What do we mean by education? No debate has been more bitter or more prolonged — not even the religious controversy — than the debate over the aims of education. Here, too, we have our Fundamentalists and our Modernists. The older educators limited education to the imparting of discovered facts and accepted theories. To educate a child was to teach that child to respect the institutions and customs of his fathers and to accept those institutions and customs without question. The purpose of education was the maintenance of the condition in which the child found himself at birth. It encouraged no investigation. On the contrary, it discouraged investigation. It meant the training of youth to fit himself into the traditions of the elders. The teacher who could turn out a group of children who would unhesitatingly conform to the accepted customs was a successful teacher. There were certain traits which the child was expected to have. One of these was the acceptance of the religion of his fathers. Another was obedience to the laws of the land without any criticism of those laws. Another was the belief that America was the greatest country on the face of the earth and the determination to keep it so even at the cost of human blood. All the subjects of the curriculum were so taught as to bring about the result of conformability. The ideal was likeness, the method limitation, and the result a Christian citizen who regarded the *status quo* as divinely inspired and who resisted all efforts at changing it.

Gradually new ideas secured place and influence and the system began to change, but every new idea had to do battle with traditional methods and won only by sacrifice through compromise. In the course of a decade students of education, looking back over the struggle, could see that an advance had been made, and so the pioneering spirit was kept alive. However, we are still debating the objectives of education. Only yesterday Professor Whitehead published a book on *The Aims of Education* in which he enters a drastic criticism of our present-day educational methods and objectives. Some time ago, in his published lectures on *Education for a Changing Civilization,* Professor Kilpatrick pronounced a bold indictment of the educational objectives which obtain in our school system. Professor Dewey has been insisting for many years that we are on the wrong track. Professor Hughes Mearns believes that we must radically alter our present methods. Elizabeth Irwin is experimenting in a New York City public school with "the new education." One might go on almost indefinitely with examples. Obviously, the old order is breaking up and we are at the beginning of a new era in education. What is the key-note of all this criticism? Professor Mearns calls it " creative education " as opposed to what he terms " product education." He asserts that we have bent our energies to turning out products at the end of a course of study precisely as Mr. Ford turns out cheap automobiles. Our schools are factories from which come forth in regular procession commodities to be used in our great industrial machine, televoxes which will perform certain tasks at the will of the manipulators. If we are to change this condition and get from our schools not products but men of inventive ability and individual worth, Professor Mearns holds that we must begin at the very bottom and substitute " creative education " for our formal education. We must regard each child as a unit and see that whatever ability he has shall be developed to the full. In short, " creative education " has for its aim not a good citizen, not a good worker, not a good Christian, but a real personality.

Professor Kilpatrick expresses much the same criticism and remedy. In more philosophic tone he finds our present educational system static, depending upon authoritarianism. He sees civilization moving forward, leaving behind it every phase of authority. Science which is fast taking possession of the world we live in, acknowledges but one authority — the authority of "tested thought." Professor Kilpatrick concludes, therefore, that "our problem would seem to be to help our young people make the shift from external authority to internal authority." In his "indictment against the education hitherto in vogue" he writes:

> The original aim of the school, the induction of youth into the moral-social (religious-political) culture of the group, lends itself to traditionalism. . . . The upholders of established group opinion have always seen in the school a chief means of perpetuating the established opinion. . . . Education has been the process by which those at present in charge of affairs determined what the rising generation should think and do. . . . Our duty is to so prepare the rising generation to think that they can and will think for themselves, even ultimately, if they so decide, to the point of revising or rejecting what we now think. Our chosen beliefs will have to stand this ordeal.

Professor Kilpatrick thus views education as a means of creating personality.

Professor Whitehead is equally drastic in his condemnation of present educational objectives. He, too, would make education a developer of personality. And Dr. Robert M. Hutchins, the new head of Chicago University, joins in this harmony of voices by saying:

> Education is not to teach men facts, theories or laws. It is not to reform them, or amuse them, or make them expert technicians. It is to unsettle their minds, widen their horizons, inflame their intellect, teach them to think straight, if possible, but to think nevertheless.

What is the significance of all these criticisms? Simply this, that we have at last learned that we have in education a means of creating and developing human personality. That at once justifies us in setting up the claim that education is the fundamental answer to our question — how can we achieve a religion such as we have been discussing in this book?

For thousands of years just beneath the surface of the earth there has lain dormant a mighty physical power of which man has known nothing. He has wanted to make his labor easier, he has longed to soar up into the air, he has desired to leap across the sea, and all the while beneath his feet has rested the power to do all these things and more. At last he dug down into the earth and discovered the latent force. Today he has realized all the wishes which he had entertained for centuries. So it is with education. Man has not understood it. He has had within his reach the means of solving his vast problems. Today, he begins to understand that here is his salvation. He has been looking to the skies for salvation, and lo! he finds it in his own hands.

Obviously, the injustices of our industrial system and the iniquities of our political system have been possible only because in our mad rush for "prosperity" we have given no thought to the effect of the machine on human personality. That is, education has hitherto furnished us no aid in solving our problems. On the contrary, education has been regarded as one of the main supports of industry and industry has controlled politics. The child has been "educated" to fit into the industrial system as a cog is placed in the machine, he has been taught that when he serves industry he is serving the human family in its climb toward happiness. Such instruction is correct, of course, when industry is conceived of as a means of improvement for the human family, but no distinction has been made between industry thus conceived of and industry as a source of supplies for the money lords. Thus, there has been a great difference between the education of the child of humble parentage and the education of the child of wealthy parents. Cultural education has been the exclusive privilege of the latter class, while the former has been given vocational education of the meanest sort. Like everything else, education has been secured at a price. Those who have the price have been admitted into higher institutions of learning while those who have not been able to afford this privilege have been thrust into factories and mines with only such knowledge as would prevent their being classed as illiterates, and not always with even that knowledge.

Our new conception of education is making such a condition unacceptable, and will soon make it intolerable. We still have the high-priced schools and colleges, but our attitude is changing. Education instead of being regarded as the privilege of the few is coming to be looked upon as the right of the many. In many of our western states, university training is included in the state public school system so that the child of humble parents may begin his education in the kindergarten, pass on through elementary and high school, and take his degree in the university, all at the expense of the state. Of course, this state university system does not bring education within the reach of all, for there is still the prohibitive cost of board. The child of poor parents cannot afford to live away from home in a distant city. Yet the state university system is a step in the direction of democratic education.

It is, of course, too early to speak about the educational value of the radio and yet perhaps even now a good case might be built up for the argument that the radio is another instrumentality in the greater expansion of education. When television is perfected, this instrumentality will be greatly improved. It may be that in the not distant future, young men and young women will sit at their desks at home and receive the instruction which now can be secured only by attendance at a distant college. When that time comes, there will come with it a radical change in our whole educational system. Then every hamlet will be a university. However illusory this prophecy may prove to be, our fundamental position is valid. The facilities of education which the boys and girls of today enjoy were utterly unknown to their fathers and mothers. In method and content of teaching tremendous progress has been made in the past quarter of a century.

We have been brought to this new condition by a realization that an uneducated democracy is a menace to civilization. The principle enunciated by Lincoln that " this nation cannot exist half slave and half free " is not more true than that it cannot exist half educated and half illiterate. Our industrial and political indecencies are possible only because the people are unable to see that they are indecencies, and they are unable to see this because the opportunities of " creative education " have been withheld from them. The public-minded citizen of our time insists that this condition be radically changed, and that every individual in America be given the opportunity of seeing and understanding the conditions which exist in every part of our political and economic life. To this end various agencies are being used. One of the most recent innovations in our educational life is " adult education." Until very recently it was believed that when a man reaches twenty-five he ceases to be a learner. Whatever was to be learned must be learned in youth. Professor Thorndike has destroyed that bogey for all time. He has made it clear that there is never a time when man ceases to have the ability to learn. Through the medium of adult education, then, we are attacking the indecencies in politics and in industry. Such institutions as the Cooper Union Institute, under the capable direction of Everett Dean Martin, are being organized throughout the country. Here men and women who have been shut off from the opportunities of education, may receive instruction in politics, economics, sociology, and psychology. The result of these schools for adults will be far-reaching. The magazines, too, are beginning to exercise an important function in adult education. The trend toward the "humanizing of knowledge" is very marked in the magazine field. The old classical monthly is disappearing, and in its place we have the journal of information and controversy, in which the articles are written not for the highly educated reader but rather for the man in the street. The revolution in this field of journalism is nothing less than amazing. Twenty-five years ago *Scribner's* and *Harper's* and the *Atlantic Monthly* were to be found only in the library of the scholar. The material found in them was of such a nature that only the expert could enjoy it. Today all this is changed.

The subject matter of any one of these magazines is presented in such a way that the high school boy can understand what is being said.

Books, too, are different. Twenty-five years ago it was a rare thing to find any considerable number of books in the ordinary home. The library of the ordinary home — if it could be called a library — consisted of the *Bible, Pilgrim's Progress, The Swiss Family Robinson,* and a few Sunday-school storybooks. Today it is not an uncommon thing to find in even the poorer homes a sectional book-case filled with volumes that would command the respect of a university professor.

All this has tremendous meaning. It means that education is fast coming to be the possession of the multitude. And the result of this remarkable extension of education is bound to be the destruction of our superstitions in every department of life. The old attitudes and the new education cannot exist side by side indefinitely. As the new education is extended, the old superstitions are sure to fade out. The absurdities and indecencies of our political and industrial life have been possible only because we have not hitherto understood the meaning of education. We have not tapped the resources that have been ready at hand. We have thought of education as a means of forcing the child to accept our political *mores* as divinely inspired. Criminality in political and industrial circles has been covered up wherever this has been possible, and when it has been impossible, we have tried to excuse it by a variety of methods none of which can stand honest investigation. The most popular of these methods has been to select a " goat " upon whom, though he may have been the least guilty of all, all the odium has been loaded. Sometimes he has been thrust into jail, but generally he has managed to make his escape to parts unknown, a method that is most agreeable to those higher up, for if the " goat " is in parts unknown, he cannot be interviewed by some " careless " though enterprising reporter. To permit him to escape is the modern version of the old adage, " Dead men tell no tales." If a President finds himself on the verge of being drawn into difficulty because of too great an interest in oil, the machinery of escape is set in motion. It would never do to have the youth of America know that a President of the United States could stoop so low as to be party to an oil steal. That would spoil the youth's conception of the glory of the country, and it might check his ardor when volunteers are called for in time of war. Means must be chosen to protect the record of the administration. Hitherto these efforts have been surprisingly successful; but with the advent of the new education, there is no longer any possibility of keeping such malfeasance under cover. Even if the officers of public education were not themselves growing more insistent on making hidden things plain, it would still be impossible for those guilty of maladministration to hide their activities. Institutes of adult education, books by inquisitive writers, articles by free students, and many other agencies would seek them out. All these instruments of public education insist on dealing very frankly with evil in high places even though in so doing some of the luster is rubbed off the highly polished surface of our boasted American superiority.

But, we are asked, what has all this to do with religion? Nothing, or everything, as we view religion. Nothing, if by religion we mean the old superstitions of organized Christianity; everything, if by religion we mean a devotion to the ordinary interests of man prompted by the scientific attitude. If religion is of the cloistered variety, if salvation is from earthly woe and eternal hell to heavenly bliss, all that has been said is mere verbiage signifying nothing. On the contrary, if religion is to deal with the welfare and happiness of mankind here on this planet, if it is to be the will to social progress, then, obviously, what we have said is pertinent, and we are right in maintaining that education is the means of establishing such a religion.

The proposition that our future safety rests upon the extension of the new education will, we believe, meet with general agreement among educated people, but it is not improbable that many who accept that proposition will decline to recognize the connection between education and religion which we have presented in this chapter. Many of those who are disgusted with Christianity and who cast it away not only as a valueless collection of superstitions but as a positive hindrance to human progress, have no use for even the word *religion.* " Why," they ask, " do we not cut loose completely from all the trappings of antiquity and forge our own independent and untramelled philosophy of life? " This, we believe, is due to a complete misunderstanding of the nature of religion. Religion is no exception to the rule that every phase of man's life is a step in the evolutionary process. We must do here exactly what we have done elsewhere. It seems a foolish thing to cast away words merely because they have had in the past a meaning which we do not now accept. Earlier in this book we have said that there is no longer any need for the word *God,* and our present critics may attack us on this score. Let us, therefore, explain that it is not that we have any objection to the word *God.* It is simply that that particular word is not necessary, and that every meaning that attaches to it is a meaning which seems to us destructive of the highest interests of mankind. If the word could be divorced from all its older meanings and be brought to mean, for instance, social consciousness, there would be no reason whatever for casting it aside; but this is obviously impossible. There are other words which have changed their meanings — indeed, what word has not? The word *government,* for example, is equally applicable to monarchy, bureaucracy, autocracy, and democracy. Those who have become convinced that democracy is the true method of directing the affairs of state do not discard the word *government* merely because it has been used to designate outworn forms. It is true that the word *religion* has been used to designate a belief in monotheism, and before that in polytheism, and before that in animism and totemism; but when man ceased to believe in animism and came at last to accept monotheism, he did not cast aside the word *religion.* Religion had merely passed from one state to another in evolution. Animism, polytheism, and monotheism are merely steps in man's progress to a higher type of religion. Secularism is the latest step in that progression. Religion seems to be the word best suited to our purpose in referring to that which expresses itself in this variety of forms, and, so far as we can see, nothing but an absurd prejudice would prevent its use.

There remains for consideration in this chapter one more question. Let me introduce it by referring to a sermon which was preached a few years ago by Dr. J. H. Randall. Dr. Randall, then occupying a liberal pulpit in New York City, spoke of education as being of four kinds. First, there is elementary education, second, secondary education; third, higher education; and finally, the highest education, which is religion. Such a classification, I believe, misses the real point in both education and religion. Religion is not education at all. Religion is the will to live creatively. It is the drive within a man which makes that man cease to regard his environment as a means to personal satisfaction and which forces him to regard his environment as a means to the happiness of all. Let me illustrate. I find the ignorant being exploited by the crafty. I may look on that condition as pitiable but be not sufficiently stirred by the injustice to regard it as *my* business to do anything about it. That is, I feel no urge to help those who are being exploited. I may consider my own ease as of greater moment than their need. In that case I have no religion. On the other hand, I may grow indignant at the injustice, and I may experience an urgent desire to assist those who are being exploited to liberate themselves from the disgusting condition of servitude. That force within me that compels me to do something to help them is not education. Granted that it is the result of education, it is not itself education. It is something, also, more than sympathy. It is a sympathy that has been aroused to action. Real religion combines this urgent desire with a scientific study of the conditions that lead to the exploitation, and seeks to change those conditions.

The method employed in the attempt to change the condition differs with the individual. If I am of a political turn of mind I may try to secure the passage of legislation to make the exploitation illegal. But if I am wise, I will not do this until there is sufficient public opinion to make the legislation effective. By hurriedly passing legislation that does not have behind it the power of public opinion, I am merely adding a new menace without altering the evil that already exists. The better plan, indeed the only effectual plan, is to educate the people who are being driven and, if possible, the drivers, so that the one will refuse to be driven and the other to drive. Education, then, is not religion; it is the method by which religion establishes itself.

If real religion is to be established, it is clear that the people must be brought to the point where they can distinguish the true from the false, where they can recognize superstition for what it is, and where they will not be misled by the highly emotionalized appeals of evangelists and politicians. Only the gullible are ensnared by these publicity agents of Christianity and partisan politics. An excellent definition of education would be this: education is the method of preventing gullibility. Since it is gullibility that keeps the people under the sway of the superstitions of Christianity, education is one of the two means of establishing religion as the modern man regards it. In the next chapter we shall consider the second of these means.

## *II. Religion Establishing Itself: Continued*

IS it possible to educate everybody? Not long ago it was believed that we could. Educators thought that the only reason why the general public was not completely educated lay in the inefficiency of our methods of education. The proposition that was presented to their minds was a very simple one. It could be stated about as follows: Here are books; here are teachers; and there are the people. The duty of the teacher was to get the knowledge contained in the books into the heads of the people. If the people, under such circumstances, do not sooner or later become educated, the difficulty lies in one or both of two facts: either the teaching methods are faulty or the money appropriated for the work is inadequate. Upon these two defects, therefore, educators concentrated their attention. It soon became evident that there must be another factor which had escaped attention. Research work was undertaken to discover the missing factor. At length it became clear that people are not equal in the capacity to learn. The democratic dogma of equality was challenged. “ Individual differences ” were discovered. Mathematics came to be a part of the equipment of the educator, and education became a science. The mind of man was measured, and it was found that some people have a high degree of educability, while others have a very low degree of educability. This discovery completely altered the educational outlook. At this point much pessimism crept in. Writers began to despair of civilization. Extremists, seeing an opportunity to exploit the situation, cast upon the reading public the fruits of their too vivid imagination. The number of those who were incapable of a high degree of education was exaggerated to the point of hopelessness. At last, however, sanity emerged from all this confusion. Educators began to find new data upon which to base their conclusions. Writers were no longer attracted by pessimism. Extremists laid their pens away. We understood that we were confronted with a condition that was indeed deplorable but not hopeless, a condition with which we must deal in all earnestness and without delay. Then the question arose: How can we deal effectively with this condition? To have reached a state of mind which prompted such a question was to have come within sight of the solution. Obviously, two alternatives were open to us. We could divide humanity into two classes, the learned and the unlearned. The former could do the creative work of the world; the latter could attend to the work which called for no inventive ability. We could so arrange our educational system as to fix these castes by giving the one class that kind of training which would make them better able to carry on the inventive work, while to the second class we could give that kind of training which would make them more efficient mechanical workers. The only difficulty with this arrangement was that while it was excellently fitted to an aristocratic form of government, it was entirely unsuited to a democratic form of government. Since the majority of people seemed to be in the uneducable class, they could dominate the government by sheer force of numbers. They could not only elect whomever they wanted as officers of the government, but they could determine the educational policies as well. Consequently, the result would be a levelling down process that, while it would eliminate casts, would also drag all men down to ignorance and superstition.

The second alternative was that of eliminating the unfit, thus raising the entire citizenship to the higher status. Instead of a levelling down, we should then have a levelling up. But the question was: Where shall we begin our process of elimination? An obvious method would be to give everybody an intelligence test. All who failed to make the grade of seventy-five might be stood up against the wall and shot. That would certainly be effective though probably not popular enough to win much support, and there is the added difficulty that no intelligence test has yet been devised that would give sufficiently positive results as to justify us in the wholesale slaughter.

However, we are not limited to this alternative. In some of our states, the marriage laws require that persons applying for license to marry submit themselves for medical examination. If such persons are found to be tubercular or syphilitic or cancerous, they are refused the license. This is certainly a step in the direction of a eugenic program. At least we are shown that the way to begin our effort at the elimination of the unfit is to redefine the word *unfit* in physical rather than mental terms. Certainly not a little of mental deficiency is caused by physical ill-health. If we can eliminate the physically unfit we shall have taken a great step forward toward our goal. But, in the judgment of competent scholars, the action of the states which refuse to grant marriage licenses on the basis of physical unfitness is both ineffective and unjust. It is unjust because it denies to those who wish to find happiness in the marital relation the opportunity to find such happiness. It condemns them to live a life of celibacy with all the consequent disorders that attend such a life. It is ineffective because those who are excluded from the right to be legally happy are thereby encouraged to find that happiness in illicit relations. It is quite unnecessary to follow the implications of this thought. But why should we refuse them a license? The thing to be prevented is not marriage but childbirth. A more thoroughgoing method, attended by neither ineffectiveness nor injustice, would be to require those who suffer the defects discovered by the medical examination to undergo an operation which would sterilize them and so prevent the possibility of progeny from their union.

It is perfectly obvious that this method of sterilization would ultimately eliminate the physically unfit, but it would not result in the attainment of our aim at elevating the masses to the point of high educability. Mental unfitness arises from other causes than physical disease. One of these is the overcrowded home. In former times, when there was plenty of space and when the chief need was the multiplication of the man power with which to till the fields, families of ten and twelve children were desirable. In our modern urbanized civilization a family of such proportions is not only not desirable but it constitutes a real menace to national welfare. The man of moderate means cannot properly bring up a family of such size. It takes all the money he can make to feed and clothe such a family. Nothing is left over for their education. As soon as the children are old enough, they are thrust into the factory or the store in order to assist in the task of providing the necessities of life for their brothers and sisters. The greater the number of children, the less possibility of educating them. Even the introduction of the free school system, which we have considered in the previous chapter, would not solve this problem, for the necessity of providing food, clothing, and shelter takes precedence over the necessity of furnishing education.

We are coming more and more to see that education is not only a concern of the school, but that it is equally a concern of the home, and educators know that the influence of the home is infinitely greater than the influence of the school. The mother of a large family charged with the duty of caring for the physical needs of her children, has no time to give to their mental needs. She has no opportunity to improve her own mind by reading and other recreation. She is a slave to the preparation of food and to the mending of torn clothing. When she has fulfilled these duties, she has neither time nor inclination even if she has the ability to attend to the mental development of her many offspring.

All these considerations lead us to ask, What can be done to make the overcrowding of the home unnecessary? It is clear that if children are to be given a chance to grow in mind, some effective method of the limitation of reproduction must be found. While educators have been engaged in the philosophic side of this work, the medical profession has not been idle. During the past two decades research and experimentation have given us the implements of human engineering, so that today we are able to reach our goal. If this information could be given with public approval, fathers and mothers could determine the number of children to be called into being. Those who want large families would be able to satisfy that desire; while those who are doubtful of the ability to properly raise a large family might be relieved of the necessity of having one.

In the old South female slaves were compelled to have as many children as they could bear. Women, like cattle, were breeders of salable commodities. Every additional child born in the slave quarters meant so much more wealth in the master's strong chest. It is easy to understand the attitude of the slave-owner; but it is hard to see why any honest, sympathetic person today should want to compel womanhood to sink to the level of breeding machines. Why should a woman be required to bring into the world more children than she can properly take care of? If the means of family limitation are at hand, why should they be kept from her? After all, woman is human. She is neither a machine to be controlled according to the wishes of a master nor a beast to be used by a heartless driver. She is a personality and as such she should determine what she will and will not do.

One of the objections to the dissemination of contraceptive information is that if women know of a means to prevent childbirth, they will refuse to bear any children, and the future of civilization will suffer through a decrease in population. Much might be said on this point. It might be shown that the world is in danger of over-population. Our humanitarianism is rapidly ridding the world of the scourges which in former times served to prevent over-population. The average length of life is greater than in former days. It is also held that a decrease in population would seriously interfere with industrial progress by cutting down the number of workers. That might have been a reasonable criticism yesterday, but its validity is challenged today by the fact that the machine is rapidly displacing labor with the result that more than four million men walk the streets hunting for work. Today one man is needed to operate a machine which does the work formerly done by a hundred hands. Consequently, an excellent case could be built up to show that that which is presented as a menace — namely, the cutting down of population — would be, on the contrary, a great blessing. But the fact is that the objection to family limitation on the score that it would encourage women to refuse to bear any children is altogether invalid and absurd. The normal woman does not rebel against child-bearing; on the contrary, she welcomes it. Nature has placed within her heart a longing for the delights of motherhood. She does seek to escape from the *pains* of childbirth. She does rebel against the Christian doctrine that condemns her to bear children in agony of travail because of an ancient curse which reads, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception: in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee." And here modern medicine comes to her relief. Childbirth is no longer the terrible ordeal that it once was. Only in the case of those who by physical disability are compelled to go through inexpressible agony, is childbirth a threat to the life of the mother, and here contraceptive knowledge should be imparted. Indeed, in some of our more progressive states the medical doctor is legally empowered to give this knowledge in such cases. But the normal woman is saved much of the pain by medical assistance, and therefore, she may look forward to motherhood with delight.

A second objection, more popular in former days than now, is the fact that if women know how to prevent childbirth they will, in limiting the number of children, place limitations on the man-power of the nation in times of war. There was not a little reason in this objection when war was recognized as a necessary part of international relations, but today, with war consigned to the category of crime, with all the world thinking in terms of international peace, with statesmen visiting distant nations in an effort to reach international agreements that will make war impossible, the reasonableness of this objection vanishes. To advance it among intelligent people today would bring down upon the advocate a deserved derision.

It is said that if contraceptive knowledge is made public, women who wish to indulge in sexual promiscuity will feel no restraint over their misconduct. On the face of it, that appears to be a tenable position. Its weakness, of course, lies in the fact that women who wish to indulge in illicit sexual conduct already have a knowledge of child prevention. It may be that the knowledge which they have is not of a scientific nature. It may be that the knowledge which they have is that which in its application brings ill health and disease in its train. But they have a knowledge of contraceptives of one sort or another. No " street girl " any longer fears the birth of a child as the result of her midnight adventure. She carries in her hand-bag that upon which she can depend to save her from such an eventuality.

It is also said that contraceptive knowledge would increase prostitution, that young women who now avoid sexual misconduct would adopt a freer attitude if they knew that they could escape the stigma that would be brought upon them by having an illegitimate child. Such a statement lays the person who makes it open not only to the charge of being old-fashioned, but it places him in the position of a slanderer of the young womanhood of today. It is safe to say that the majority of young women today know some method of contraception. If they desire to indulge in sexual conduct they are not deterred by ignorance of ways to escape its effects. If they do not enter into sexual conduct, it is because they are prevented by other and more praiseworthy reasons, for it is scarcely praiseworthy to refuse such indulgence only because there is danger of childbirth. The declaration that young women refuse such indulgence because they fear its effects is, I repeat, a slander on the young womanhood of America.

Careful and unprejudiced examination fails to reveal any valid reason for opposition to making contraceptive information available to the womanhood of our country. On the contrary, it reveals the multitudinous benefits that would accrue from such an action. Why, then, do we not make this information public? There is just one answer. The opposition appears to be exclusively on the part of orthodox clergymen. The old religion is yet powerful enough to have its way with us, and to force upon us its superstitions and its bigotry.

The Catholic Church, supported by orthodox clergymen, insist on the prevention of the public dissemination of this knowledge. It is not difficult to understand why the Catholic Church takes this position. Of course we should expect that church to do so in the light of its past history. It has always been conservative. It has never accepted progressive ideas until the force of public opinion has made any other position ridiculous. But there is an additional reason for its attitude in this particular case, and that reason is altogether logical and understandable. The Catholic Church does not, like

Protestant churches, expand by conversion. The number of converts to Catholicism is negligible, and is due in nearly every case to intermarriage. Its expansion is due rather to multiplication. The decrease in the birth-rate among Catholic families would mean the weakening of the church. It cannot be expected to support that which would affect it so disastrously. Catholicism does not grow by appealing to the human intellect. Occasionally a man of prominent place in the world of scholarship moves, not without hesitation, toward Catholicism, but he is actuated rather by the emotions of fear and dependence than by any intellectual agreement with the fundamental position of the church. These accretions are so few that they attract public notice. But the strength of Catholicism is dependent upon its ability to train its children to accept its dogmas unquestioningly. To this end it maintains its own educational system instead of using the public school. All that the Catholic child learns must have a Catholic flavor. Therefore, it would be suicidal for the Catholic church to support the modern reform of which we are speaking. This, I repeat, is altogether understandable; but it is not so easy to understand why Protestant clergymen join the

Catholic Church in this effort. Here the reason is obviously altogether theological. The position may be stated as follows: Every child born in the world is not only a child of its earthly parents; it is a potential child of God. I say potential, because according to the doctrines held by these clergymen, that child is a child of evil until it is reborn by repentance, conversion, and baptism into the family of God. That child was born in sin. It inherits the taint of Adam's sin in the garden. It must, therefore, be spiritually born in order to be God's child. But it is a potential child of God, and the clergymen referred to refuse to have God's family limited. Notwithstanding the fact that the child, if it fails to accept the orthodox God, will go to eternal hell, these kindly gentlemen insist that it be born and take its chances. It would seem a kindlier thing to prevent its birth. It enters life with all the chances against it. It inherits a sin of which it cannot be guilty. It comes unwanted into a family already overburdened with responsibilities. It faces the possibility of poor physical health due to an insufficiency of food. It confronts the probability of going through life without the support of education which, if the church doctrines are educationally sound, it needs to enable it to see the truth of these doctrines. It is thus handicapped from its very birth. Yet these good gentlemen insist that it be born. If I believed what these men believe, I would not only not oppose the dissemination of the means of preventing the birth of unwanted children, but I would go further and insist that every person alive today be sterilized so that there would be no possibility of adding to the number of those who will be compelled to suffer the tortures of the damned. It seems to me that any other attitude than that represents a heartlessness that is fit to be classified only as gross inhumanity.

However, we are paying altogether too much attention to Fundamentalist objection, for, of course, it is not the activity of these gentlemen that retards this great moral reform. That they think it is, is merely another evidence of the ease with which they blind themselves. The prevention of the dissemination of contraceptive information must be accounted for by the opposition of the Catholic Church. That Catholicism dominates American political life cannot be proved. The recent Presidential election, in fact, seems to disprove it, but that the Catholic Church does have a very great influence on political life is indisputable. Men with political aspirations know this and govern themselves accordingly. When matters, which appear to them unimportant, arise and the Catholic Church advances like an army with banners against the proposed legislation, the legislators who are given to examining affairs from the point of view of expediency rather than from that of the public welfare, decline to resist and, like Pilate of old, let those who threaten have their way. They do not resist, in many cases, because they do not understand the importance of the issue. They might be willing to risk giving offense even to the powerful, united Catholic Church if the issue seemed to them of sufficient importance, but since it does not, they are directed by expediency. If at this point, Protestantism would unitedly cast its influence in favor of the measure, politicians might be led to consider it seriously; but Protestantism possesses no unity — a fact with which politicians are well acquainted — and it is as blind to the importance of this reform as Catholicism and the politicians. When public opinion is aroused, politicians will be glad to give heed to it. Then the Catholic Church and the Fundamentalists will accept the inevitable, the former gracefully, the latter with much blustering and loud condemnation of a nation on the way to eternal destruction.

What we started out in this chapter to say is that the program of family limitation is a means of establishing real religion. We seem to have maneuvered ourselves into a corner so that instead of showing that religion is established by the reform, we are proving that religion is the establisher of the reform. The fact is that both propositions are true. Every great reform has been brought about because the people feel a mighty urge to correct an evil which threatens the safety of the state. It is equally true that the reform is a means of strengthening the urge which brings about its attainment. Slavery was abolished because a great people, animated by a truly religious motive, recognized its destructive influences. They knew that freedom is essential to human development. But as soon as freedom was attained, it became a support of religion. Indeed, in its very attainment, in the efforts that accompanied its realization, it was the greatest pillar of religion that can be found in that particular decade. Today, women and men are enslaved to fear and drudgery. Home-life is robbed of its highest satisfactions. In this crisis, religion is stepping into the struggle for freedom, and it is both giving and receiving strength.

The aim of real religion, we repeat, is the attainment of happiness and the enrichment of personality for all mankind. Refusing to believe that man should endure the evils of this life in order to gain happiness in a world to come, it welcomes every movement that makes for the alleviation of distress. It sees in the reform commonly called "birth control," such a movement. Through this reform and through the enlargement and refinement of educational facilities it beholds life made easier and finer for its sons and daughters. It sees the home opened to the highest possibilities of culture. It sees the wife glad to receive the untarnished love of her husband. It sees little children liberated from neglect and oppression. It sees the eyes of the fathers of the future glisten with pride in their children. These visions are worth a thousand times more than the mirage which the Christian church has held up before our eyes.

All this may be Utopian, but life without its Utopias is unbearable. We may never reach the goal at which we aim, but at least if we make it our goal, we shall attain unto that which is far better than anything we have today. The measure of our progress will be according to the beauty of our ideal, its beauty and its unattainable height.

## III. *Alternatives to Humanitarian Religion*

IN the foregoing chapters I have tried to present a religion which modern man can accept without doing violence to his intellect. That religion is frankly humanitarian in content. It discards all ideas of supernaturalism. It does not declare dogmatically that there is no God, but it disclaims any dependence upon God. It places the task of finding God in the hands of the scientist, conscious that whether he succeeds or fails, life on this planet will not be affected. If at last God is found to exist, there will be a rejuvenation of Fundamentalism, unless Fundamentalism has by that time completely disintegrated. Doubtless Modernism, too, may say, " We told you so," and will attempt to rebuild its ruined shrines; but few people will find within themselves any desire to reëstablish the old forms or remouth the old shibboleths.

However, it is a waste of time to enter into these idle prophecies. At the present time there is little evidence upon which to base such an hypothesis as we are considering. Leading scientists of our time

— even those who prefer to hold on to the idea of God — are careful to explain that there is no proof of the existence of God. Professor Eddington, in his chapter on "Science and Mysticism," in which he offers his excuses for continuing to accept the existence of God, though just what particular idea of God he holds is left somewhat in doubt, disclaims any ability to "ram religious convictions into an atheist" but suggests that the atheist "may begin to realize that he is missing something in life which is worth attaining," a statement which is based on the pure assumption that something is really to be missed. Confronted, however, with the question which no scientific mind could long avoid and remain a scientific mind, he states very frankly, "We cannot pretend to offer proofs," and a paragraph or so later on, he adds, "Science cannot tell whether the world-spirit is good or evil, and its *halting argument* for the existence of God might equally be turned into an argument for the existence of a Devil." (Italics my own.)

Let us suppose that modern man rejects humanitarian religion,[1] what other alternatives are left to him? He has already examined Modernism and he has rejected it as being the least satisfactory of all religious efforts. The point at which the Modernists are self-deceived is in thinking that the man who has put superstitions behind him will go back to the diluted form of Christianity which they represent. He will not do that. If he goes back at all, he will go back beyond Modernism. He cannot be satisfied with the vagueness and hesitancy of Modernist Christianity.

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[1] The writer has refrained from calling the religion which he has been discussing by any particular name other than human-

There appear, then, to be but three alternatives. The first of these is the æstheticism of men like John Cowper Powys. This æstheticism contains the old forms but regards them simply as objects of beauty. The search for the beautiful has always been closely related to the search for the true. Powys is a modern Greek who detests the ugly and loves the beautiful for its own sake. He makes

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itarianism because (1) some of the ideas which he advances may be objectionable to the particular group whose name he might employ; and (2) because various groups have been organized about these general ideas during the past half or three quarters of a century. Some of these groups have taken the purely critical attitude toward older forms on the very correct assumption that the false must be destroyed before the true can be taught, a problem met with in all re-education. Others, though not neglecting the criticism of older forms, have emphasized a positive philosophy of life.

beauty his religion wherever he beholds it. Now, there is a great deal in such a conception of religion that wins our interest; but we balk at the evasion that is implicit in it, and we raise the objection that it leaves a wide territory for those who accept the beauty of the old forms without recognizing, as Powys does, their wholly mythical character. Man is not merely a worshipper at the shrine of beauty, he is also a disciple in the temple of reason, and his intellect and his imagination cannot long suffer the war within which such a conception of religion involves. There are doubtless many people who would follow this modern mystic in making a religion of beauty, but who would decline to accept the ancient forms as part of their worship. The fact is that those ancient forms have been so intimately associated with cruelty and repression that they have become dissociated altogether from any relation to the beautiful. A guillotine, standing on the skyline at dusk, is not without a certain element of beauty, but few people would wish to make it a part of their religious ceremony. It recalls the bloody revolution too vividly. Christ, suspended on the cross, may be an object of beauty to those whose eyes are dulled by superstition, but to many of us that spectacle is merely an ugly reminder of Roman injustice and Jewish bigotry in league against freedom of thought.

A moment ago we said that those who are inclined to look backward for their religious guidance will go far back beyond Modernism, and that fact is demonstrated in the case of a few individuals who have been "converted" to Catholicism. These people are divided into two general classes. There are those who are not dissimilar in attitude from Powys. They behold the beauty in the Mass and, acting on the principle that all beauty must be conserved, they insist on becoming Catholics to save the beauty of Catholicism, apparently unmindful of the fact to which we have referred, namely, that such beauty is disfigured by its historic connections. It is difficult for anyone who knows the tragic story of the Inquisition to feel much devotion to the Mass. However, these people draw a line between the Mass as beauty and the Mass as truth, and accept the former blindly while they reject the latter wholeheartedly. All the ceremonialism of the Catholic system becomes symbolical. This abdication of reason to emotion is puzzling to those of us who believe that intellect and emotion should team up side by side, or to carry out our figure, that intellect and emotion should reign as king and queen over the realm of personality.

The second class of those who go back to Catholicism is composed of those who are not, in any real sense of the word, modern men. They are men whose inhibitions are so strong that the sense of dependence is more powerful than the sense of adventure. John Henry Newman was a representative of this class in his day, and G. K. Chesterton may be regarded as its modern exponent, though the latter is a sort of half-breed between the symbolists and the inhibitionists, out of which fact arises his flair for paradox and equivocation. The people to whom we refer have gone a short distance into the realm of reason and have become fearful that they may at last reach a place where they will lose all the things in which they have believed. Disturbed by the possibility of having to face the future without any of the supports to which they have been accustomed, they turn back to the other extreme and resign themselves to the hands of the church. Thereafter they allow Rome to do their thinking for them. This is, of course, a species of cowardice which the truly modern mind cannot but abhor.

Whatever be the outcome, the modern man will not, at least in very great numbers, return to Catholicism from such a motive.

One more alternative is to be considered. This is Materialism. If the modern man rejects humanitarian religion he may become, and in the judgment of the writer, he will become a Materialist. At this point I think I hear our Orthodox and Modernist friends say, " Well, that is not such a great step. What is your humanitarian but a Materialist anyhow? There is a vast difference between them. The Materialist is a cynic and a fatalist. He looks on life with no disposition to alter the condition of affairs. If things are bad, they are bad because the machine of the universe grinds them out that way, and there is no possibility of our interference with the machine to make it grind in any other way. What is to be, will be. We are unwilling to accept such stark pessimism. We reject the god of Materialism as we reject the God of Orthodoxy or the God of Modernism, and for reasons that are not very dissimilar. As a matter of fact, there is no substantial difference in attitude between the Christian and the Materialist. We enter the lists against them both; against the former because they declare that since heaven will be beautiful, earth is to be endured; against the latter because they say that since the cosmic machine determines all things, earth must be taken as it is without any effort to improve it. He whom we call the humanitarian is neither cynic nor fatalist. He does not look upon the conditions of life as fixed by the inexorable laws of mechanism any more than he regards those conditions as bound by the whimsical laws of Jehovah. If conditions are evil, he believes that they should be and can be changed, and he contends against the inertia of Christianity on the one hand and the cynicism of Materialism on the other.

In conclusion, let us look at each of these alternatives in the light of their probable effects on the future of mankind. In the case of Catholicism, we have a right to judge the future by the past. It is, of course, possible that Catholicism may change, since theoretically the decisions of one man determine what it shall do and what it shall believe. The Catholic Church is an hierarchy, that is, it is a coherent organization with authority concentrated in its chief officer, the Pope. The Pope, speaking *ex cathedra,* is infallible. If at some future time, the Pope should assume a very liberal attitude and declare himself in favor of a humanitarian position, though such an action would without doubt create a considerable stir among the lower orders which might lead to a division, it is probable that the vast majority of Catholics would accept the new situation and adjust themselves accordingly. But while this is theoretically possible, it is most improbable that such a reversal will take place. Catholicism is tenacious of historical positions. While the *ex cathedra* pronouncements of the Pope are infallible, there is the fact to be considered that by making any radical alteration in the doctrinal positions of the church, the Pope would admit in effect that former Popes were not infallible. Thus, the very dogma of infallibility itself would be imperilled, since that dogma was established by a Pope speaking *ex cathedra.* Few students of the Catholic system would be willing to advance the idea which we have suggested. There is, therefore, little to be hoped for in this alternative. The Catholic Church will continue to exist for many a year, but with the progress of liberal education and the further development of science, we may see the ultimate disruption of Catholicism precisely as we are today witnessing the disintegration of Protestantism. And if Catholicism should reverse itself, it is most improbable that the reversal would be thoroughgoing enough to attract the modern man; and it is probable that the reversal will be so long delayed that modern men will have become habituated to other agencies through which to accomplish their purposes.

The alternative offered by Powys and by the symbolists generally labors under a very great handicap, namely, that poets constitute but a small percentage of the population. The result, therefore, would be but little different from that which we see today. Here and there we find a man who worships the beautiful, but the vast majority of men are practical rather than imaginative, and the environment in which modern man finds himself discourages any hope that this condition will be remedied for a long time to come. Æstheticism and symbolism would but perpetuate the division of the world's population into two classes, the practical folk and the æsthetes, with the former in a very great majority — grubworms and glow-worms with but little difference between them other than the illusive, phosphorescent glow, both holding on to ancient forms, the one keeping those forms in their original dusty hue, the other painting the forms with brilliant colors.

And what of Materialism? What would such a religion do to us? Materialism looks on the world of men, smiles mirthlessly, and exclaims, "What's the use? It would be better not to have been born, but here we are, so let's get all that we can out of life. He who cannot get anything for himself, let him dig for a bare existence, or let him put an end to his miserable life. Neither his life nor ours has any meaning. All is at the mercy of the machine. Some day the machine will grind itself out and the huge joke called life will be over. It is all contemptible and the sooner it is over the better." Materialism sees no happy future. Past, present, future, all mean the same thing — irony! Life is a great hoax played on each of us. Life is neither real nor earnest as the gentle-hearted Longfellow sang. It is cruel for most people and sordid for the rest. The only thing to do is to laugh at it, accept its cruelty and its sordidness, and at last die thankful that the jest is over.

The modern man simply cannot sink into such tragic pessimism as that. On the contrary, he declares that if life has no meaning, it is man's fault that it has none; if it is cruel, it is man's fault for allowing it to be so; and it is man's high duty to give life both meaning and beauty. The Christian church is right in one thing — that the world must be saved; but saved from what and to what? Not from a theological hell to a theological heaven, but from selfishness, whether it arises from the inertia of Christianity or from the cynicism of Materialism, to that for which mankind has been struggling throughout the ages — a happy life, a life in which each man's labor will be a labor of love, a life to which every man will come with joy and which, at its close, will permit him to look backward with the consciousness that he has played a significant part in the drama and forward with an assurance that he has helped to make the pathway a bit brighter for posterity, that he has created values which are eternal.

# IV

# *MODERN SUBSTITUTES*

## *I. Modern Substitutes for Ancient Dogmas*

WE have been trying throughout this book to find a religion which will satisfy the mind of a modern man. We have tried to show that no religion which is connected with any kind of superstition or which is presented as unchangeable can be accepted by the modern, intelligent person. Only a religion which recognizes superstitions as having been a part of the fading past, and only a religion which is capable of meeting the changing needs of new eras as they come will be given any consideration by men whose minds are awakened by twentieth century scientific and psychological investigation. The idea of religion which has been presented in these pages has, at least, these qualifications. This part of our search is now ended. Whether the idea of religion which we have presented will be acceptable to the modern mind is a question that time alone will determine, but in any case, the search, so far as we can undertake it, is finished, and our finding is spread out for the reader's consideration. The result is a religion divorced from dogmatism of any sort whatsoever. The writer is perfectly willing to admit that he has written under no delusion that he is saying the final word in this realm. Indeed, one of the things that he pleads for is the freedom of every thinking person to add to or subtract from any religious presentation. Since by nature all things are in the fluid state, religion must also be fluid. It is no exception to the rule. Notwithstanding that they are sung with great fervor among the faithful, there is nothing but a pretty harmony in the words

> Chance and change are busy ever,
> Man decays and nations move,
> But His widom changeth never,
> God is wisdom, God is love.

These words express a sentiment that is as false and foolish as Pippa's song, " God's in his heaven; all's right with the world."

The idea of religion which we have presented very frankly turns our eyes away from heaven toward the earth. It knows nothing of gods and angels and devils. It has no debates about Trinities and Virgin Births. It does not concern itself with miracles and sacraments. It sees humankind involved in a more or less confused and confusing thing called life, and it seeks to bring some order out of the confusion. It sees mankind — or the larger portion of it — suffering the degrading influences of a disgusting slavery to fear and lust. Against all that enslaves man it would cast the power of an enlightened intelligence. It would use science not merely as a goad to thrust mankind toward material welfare, but as a means to cultural improvement. It would lift man up from a toiler in the dirt to a creative artist. It would apply the scientific spirit to every human endeavor, and it would touch that spirit with an idealism that would save science from itself. It would encourage man to use the machine rather than to be abused by the machine. It would protect the oppressor from the inevitable effects of his own conduct. It would bring about among men not the vague "brotherhood of man" of which the world has been talking for hundreds of centuries, but a genuine interdependence that would give to every race a self-respect and to all peoples a mutual admiration that is so missing in our life today. It would give earnest, honest attention to the vital problems of everyday living. It would substitute coöperation for competition in business and industry; sincerity for evasion in politics; health for extravagance in recreation; and sanity for fadism in education. It is this kind of religion that will satisfy the modern, intelligent man.

Now, I am perfectly aware that there were some things in the older form of religion that brought a sense of security that the religion of which I have spoken does not and cannot give. I know that there is a satisfaction in feeling that when we see our loved ones lowered into the coldness of the grave, the separation is merely an interruption of the joys which we have found in their dear companionship and not an eternal parting. I know what such a severance of relationship means, the exquisite pain of an eternal good-by. Here as elsewhere the writer makes no pretense of having spoken a final word in this controversy, but he has elected to follow the guidance of science, and science has spoken no definite word on the subject. Certain eminent scientists have stepped for a moment out of character and, moved by the hopes of their hearts rather than the convictions of their minds, have hesitantly offered the suggestion that since science has not said *No* there is the possibility — they do not even say probability — that the answer may be *Yes*. But no scientist has made an affirmation of the fact of immortality. Millikan and Eddington, Thompson and Pupin have advanced the argument that there is nothing in science that definitely contradicts the doctrine that when a man dies his spirit lives on. A few celebrated physicists, notably Sir Oliver Lodge, have offered what they seem to accept as proof that disembodied spirits have entered into communication with their earthly friends, but, thus far, the proofs offered are not sufficiently convincing to give them standing among those who look with tearless eyes at the evidence. The bereaved father, Oliver Lodge, with fond remembrances of a much-loved son, speaks in tones less clear and authoritative than the critical physicist, Sir Oliver Lodge, who talks disinterestedly of atoms and cosmic forces. This is a modern version of "Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde," save that the Mr. Hyde of this modern drama is not a slinking, cowardly criminal. He is a poor, bereaved father who, like David of the Hebrew story, mourns for his son and will not be comforted because he is not. There is a great difference between saying that science has not rejected the idea of immortality and that it has affirmed that idea. Science has not affirmed the idea and, therefore, whoever embraces it does so only on the basis of hope and faith on which basis the most fantastic notions could be accepted with equal justification. Blind unbelief is condemned by the older religionists, but surely blind belief may be regarded as an equally absurd position.

It must not be forgotten that orthodox religion has spoken with no more definiteness than has science. What educated clergyman will tell us where or what heaven is? The divine revelation pictures a city with golden streets and walls of jasper, with rivers of milk and honey running throughout the length and breadth of that happy land. Doubtless there are ministers of the gospel who look with joyful anticipation to the time when, robed in white and bearing harps of gold, they will " sweep through the gates of the New Jerusalem "; but that vivid dream of paradise is held by none whose word the educated man of today would be likely to accept, and there are hundreds of ministers of orthodoxy even who would regard it as an insult should we assert that this glorious dream is a part of their vision of the heavenly kingdom. Without intending to be flippant we may well ask the most rabid Fundamentalist if he can see any beauty in sitting beside rivers that flow with milk and honey or in walking on golden streets. Of course, the vision of St. John is a poem and nothing more.

Forgetting for the moment that Jesus was speaking of an earthly state when he made the statement, and thinking of his words as applying to the life beyond — as indeed the majority of orthodox people understand them to apply — let me ask what joy would be found in a heaven such as Jesus spoke of? To those who find their chief attraction toward an immortal life in the reunion with those whom they "have loved and lost awhile," there will be little satisfaction in the words of Jesus: "In heaven men are neither married nor given in marriage." If those words mean anything at all they mean that the relationship which we love on this earth will be an impossible relation in the life beyond the grave. Thus the words *mother*, *father*, *son*, *daughter*, *brother*, *sister*, *husband*, and *wife* will be forgotten terms. They are earthly terms not heavenly. With them, of course, will go that term which has seemed so dear to each of us — *home*. I do not know what that may mean for you, my reader, but for me it gives heaven a very cold and forbidding aspect. If the heavenly state includes none of these precious contacts which may be regarded as the highest joys of the existence to which we are accustomed, I, for one, do not desire it, and, of course, that lone sorrower, whom we left standing at the open grave, must bow as I do to the inevitable loss that is eternal.

An analysis of the hope of immortality shows that the main reason for that hope arises out of the sense of frustration in life here and now. Life holds so little for so many of us. We see others ascend to heights of success and we compare our poor attainments with their splendid achievements. We grow resentful of the conditions which hold us down. If conditions were only different, we sigh, we, too, might have accomplished noble ambitions. We, too, had dreams in youth. We, too, built castles in the air. But all those dreams have come to naught and our castles have tumbled down about our heads. We long for a land and a life where our hopes will not be thwarted and where our efforts will not be met with frustration. Here orthodox religion steps in with its consolations and its promises. "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Our spirits are renewed, our hopes spring up, our poor dead desires are resurrected, and we bow to the grinding routine of today, joyfully looking forward to the time when we shall be "heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." There is, indeed, just the shadow of a suspicion that one of our satisfactions arises from the thought that perhaps the present "lords of the earth," whose achievements we have coveted, will, in that glorious day, do us obeisance. Is not that the implication of the parable of Lazarus and Dives?

What is the effect of this groundless hope? The answer is implicit in the attitude inspired by the Christian doctrine of resignation. Endure the present injustices; be resigned to the discomforts incident to your lot in life. God has placed you in the position which you occupy. "Lay not up for yourself treasures on earth . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." An eternity of happiness will be yours in heaven; why distress yourself about the inconveniences of this present life? The inevitable result of that philosophy is continued social injustice. The vast majority of people in this land are influenced by this heavenly hope. If that great number of men and women would today realize that the only happiness which they are to enjoy must be attained during this present existence, is it conceivable that they would lie down supinely under the lash of injustice?

What effect has this hope of immortality on the individual in time of war? Practically every one of us except those who fatten upon the debasement and slaughter of their fellow-men is agreed that war is a barbarous institution that degrades mankind and threatens to destroy civilization. We would all agree that anything that tends to make war less odious should be condemned. Now, war is fundamentally determined by the attitude of the people of the nations. The attitude of the Chinese for centuries was one of opposition to the military life, and until comparatively recent times, that is, until China fell under the influence of the Western (Christian) World, few wars were heard of in her history. The Western World, on the other hand, holding a military attitude, has been almost continuously embroiled in warfare. What, then, is the attitude induced by the doctrine of immortality?

In a recent book, *Beyond Agnosticism*, Dr. Bernard I. Bell lays the blame for the World War on the fact that youth had been taught for a half century that man is an animal. He writes:

> “ If you tell a generation, from babyhood through the university, that it is an animal . . . it is apt to believe what it has been taught.”

Being an animal, man thought that he must act like an animal. Animals live by tooth and claw, the forces within their power. Man lives by the forces within his power, Big Berthas and chemical gases.

Such logic is, of course, inescapable, though there may be some question as to whether the generation referred to was taught that man is *only* an animal. Such teachers as James Harvey Robinson seem to make it sufficiently clear that man is an animal plus, that is, an animal endowed with powers of reason. However this may be, there is another philosophy that youth has been taught, and while the evolutionary philosophy reached many in the generation which furnished the “ cannon fodder ” in 1914–1918, this second philosophy was infinitely more wide-spread. It had the combined strength of school and home and church behind it. It affected every man who wore the uniform of the A.E.F. That philosophy is suggested in the ancient question, “ If a man die, shall he live again? ” The answer of the philosophy under consideration was in the affirmative. If a man is to live again, or rather, if this life is merely one phase of his eternal life, what difference does it make whether he dies in his bed at home from the effects of pneumonia germs, or on the battle-field from the effects of a burst shell? An enemy bullet does not end all. It merely terminates one journey and introduces another. As a matter of fact, the writer, who served in the A.E.F., once heard a chaplain present this very idea to a group of doughboys in France. But, if man knew that death ends all, he would be more careful with the life that he has.

To carry this thought a step farther, if a man knew that this life is the only life that he has, sacrifice would become truly heroic. When you stop to think of it, it is not very heroic to lay down one's life for one's friends if laying down one's life is merely taking off one suit of clothes to don another. Even the sacrifice of Christ was, after all, not such a glorious thing, for Jesus was merely liberated from a painful experience to enjoy a delightful experience in heaven. St. Paul had a truer idea when he said, "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain." On the other hand, the man who does not believe in any future existence and who yet lays down his life for his friends is indeed a hero. He has paid "the last full measure of devotion."

All this leads us to suggest a modern substitute for the ancient dogma of immortality. If our observation that the hope of immortality springs out of a sense of frustration, of incompleteness, is true, then, obviously what we need to do is to change our mode of life so that our lives will hold less of frustration and more of accomplishment for every man and woman. That such a change would necessitate a complete social readjustment and reorganization is granted, and that, as we have seen, is precisely what real religion would attempt. This will be the twentieth century reformation. The fifteenth century reformation touched scarcely the surface of social organization. It took power from the Pope and gave it to Luther and his co-reformers. It altered nothing save the medium. Authority went from a man to a book. Essential dogmas remained unchanged. Humankind was as much a slave to conditions as before. But the twentieth century reformation will strike far down beneath the surface. It will remold the fundamental conditions of existence. It will shake our institutions to their foundations. If it should come in a day or a week or a month, it would throw the world into a seething caldron. But it will not come in a day or a week or a decade, but gradually, as real religion takes an ever firmer grasp on the imaginations of men, and men come with ever clearer vision to compare the *what is* with the *what may be,* this reformation is bound to come. And when it comes, the old frustrations which, coupled with the heavenly hope, curse our lives with inaction and impoverishment of spirit, will cease to be and man will, for the first time in history, envisage a real immortality, the immortality of noble aspirations translated into noble achievement and bequeathed as a rich heritage to all future generations. And, if at the end of all, a thousand or a million years hence, mankind sinks into an eternal slumber, we shall not complain, for life will have been beautiful for him who has lived.

A dogma which is usually given a primary place in all theological treatises but which really stands in a secondary position in the minds of orthodox Christians is the dogma of God. I say that it takes a secondary position because Christians are more interested in eternal life for themselves than in the existence of God. The fact is that the existence of

God is accepted among orthodox people chiefly because it serves as an assurance of their personal immortality. St. Paul was a very skillful orator when he placed the hope of immortality above every other consideration. "If Christ be not risen from the dead, then is your hope vain." And ever since the days of the Apostle to the Gentiles, his successors have been using the same lure.

Orthodox believers still accept the dogma of God in its original form, that is, they believe in a "personal" God. Disregarding altogether the very obvious inconsistencies involved, they give the attributes of the divine being as: omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, perfect goodness, justice, and mercy. It is obvious that a being who is all-wise and all-powerful cannot be perfect goodness so long as the evil which is to be found on every side in this world continues to exist. The argument that he cannot prevent the evil because he has ordained it and because it is his way of helping man to develop is a most popular one, but it is a Janus-faced argument. In defending the attribute of all-goodness, it destroys his all-power and his all-wisdom, since an all-powerful, all-wise being ought surely to have been able to select a less costly, less wasteful method of securing man's development. The argument sounds as though it was invented by the same mind that invented that other curious idea that poverty is permitted because man needs it as a spur to initiative. But whether consistent or not, orthodox believers accept the idea of a personal God whom they variously call Father, King, or Lord.

Whatever may be the arguments that may be brought against such a god, it is no travesty to pray to that kind of a god, for that kind of a god must have in his power to answer, that is, to grant the prayers of the faithful, since he is all-powerful. Of course, he also has power to withhold the granting of the request, a fact that troubles many a devout believer. It is so inconvenient to discover that God has not answered prayer when the believer is quite confident that the request was in good order, that is, that it was something which could have had no bad effects and which did have many good ones. Twentieth century orthodox Christians have doubtless longed for the return of those good old days when the servants of God had but to raise their hands to heaven and the fire fell in answer to their prayers and skeptics were confounded. But there is not a little doubt as to how God will make up his mind in these modern days. He is just as likely to deny as to grant the requests of his faithful children. It is doubtful that even the most earnest Fundamentalist can persuade the divine mind to a definite decision any more certainly than the humblest of us. But, however tardy God may be in answering prayer, he is a better kind of God than the God of Modernism. The orthodox God has, at least, something understandable about him. You can preach about such a god and people will know what you are talking about. There is no cloud of scientific knowledge to obscure the face of the deity. It may be a false face but at least it looks real. But when the Modernist speaks, one hears the Modernist's definition and forgets that it has anything whatsoever to do with God. The Modernists have robbed the cradle of the mother of God and have laid therein a hollow shell like a French bisque doll. Of them it may be truly said, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." It may be that they employ the language of their definition because they dare not explain in plainer phrase the thought they hold; or it may be that they cannot make plain what they have in mind; but whatever the cause, certainly we are left with a sense of vagueness and, certainly, no one could experience very great satisfaction in praying to the empty shell of deity that they leave to us.

Nor are we offered very much assistance when we turn to those radicals who, though they are regarded as pariahs by their clerical brethren, are apparently very reluctant to dispense with the word God. In a recent sermon preached in New York City, a minister of the radical persuasion declared that when he thought of God it was as Shelley thought of the skylark. God is thus reduced to the stature of a figure of speech which has no existence outside the fancy of a poet. To find God, all men must become poets. To the thousands of men whose souls ring with no music, there is then no God. To find God, therefore, do not study theology. Read poetry. All beautiful advice, of course, but scarcely of any value to the man who is ill and wants health, or to the man who is out of work and wants employment. Friendliness alone should inform these priests of the poetic God of their error and the emptiness of their poetical phrases. Is it an act of friendliness to take from man his idea of God, a God who hears and answers prayer, and give him in return a rhetorical figure however beautiful?

Let us see what it is in the dogma of God that is so attractive to the human mind. For one thing, it is man's sense of helplessness that makes the idea of God appear so indispensable. And that sense of helplessness is perfectly normal. We suck dependency from our mothers' breasts. No animal is so dependent during its younger life as the human animal. Other animals leap and play and find food in a day or a week or a fortnight after their birth. The human animal alone extends the period of dependency into many years. Through infancy, childhood, and adolescence it is dependent upon its parents. It is but natural with these many years of habit as a background that when the child has grown to adulthood and mother can no longer satisfy his needs he should look to some "person" higher than man to give him guidance and assistance. It is not without reason that Catholics pray to the Holy Mother. That cry reaches back to infancy, and the writer would be the last to ridicule the heart-throbs which it expresses. But he would have that poor petitioner see that the basis of the hope is false, and he would substitute a real basis of hope for the false basis.

Before we attempt to suggest a substitute for the ancient dogma of God, let us consider another reason for the attractiveness of the idea of a personal God. Man is a creature of insatiable curiosity, and that curiosity leads him to ask such questions as: Whence came we? Why are we here? and, Whither are we going? The older religion answers these questions from the theological point of view. Man was created by God in the Garden of Eden about 6000 years ago; he is here on this earth for the sole purpose of " glorifying God "; and his destination is heaven, provided, of course, that he does glorify God during his present life. It is scarcely necessary to point out the unsatisfactory nature of these answers. The sciences of biology and anthropology have demonstrated the fact that man has been on this earth much longer than 6000 years. The science of sociology proves that the " chief end of man " is to do something other than glorify a God whose demand for adulation seems to be equal to that of an Oriental potentate. And so far as heaven is concerned, it may properly be termed the undiscovered country. The present writer has no argument with the curiosity that prompts these questions, nor with the questions themselves, for man's curiosity has created the modern world. The only argument that the writer has is with the answers which render man's curiosity fruitless and futile. If these questions are to be answered in any helpful manner we shall have to go to the laboratory instead of to the sanctuary, for we are in the province of science — biology, physics, sociology, and psychology. It is not prayer that we need but experimentation and patient investigation. It is one of the clever tricks of the Modernist to call prayer investigation; but the modern man sees through this subterfuge and smiles at the attempt to bolster up an old superstition with a definition which while it takes away criticism also destroys all that seemed valuable in the idea of prayer. Prayer may be, as the Modernist insists that it is, a mood of receptivity toward noble thought and high ideals, but it certainly is a petition of a human soul in need. It is the cry of a broken heart for sympathy. It is the call of dependent man for help. Despite all the efforts of Modernist ministers and scholars to change the meaning of prayer and to direct it into channels less antithetical to science, prayer may still be correctly described as "asking God for something." There is nothing wrong with that petition. The only thing that is wrong is that the petition is made to a god whose existence is not less problematical than that of the ancient Baal about whom the prophet Elijah made a few sarcastic remarks to those who were as devout and as credulous as the orthodox Christians are today.

The conclusion to which we have been leading is that the feeling of dependence and the attitude of prayer as petition are justifiable and essential to progress. Nothing is more to be deplored than a feeling of self-sufficiency, and nothing is more absurd. Perhaps no one has shown the absurdity of this idea more clearly than William C. Redfield in a small book which grew out of a lecture which he called "The World at Our Doors." Mr. Redfield has treated the subject from the point of view of economic interdependence. He shows the foolishness of a policy of isolation on the part of the nation. All the world is contributory to the needs of all the world. No nation can long continue an existence which is based upon a disregard of other nations. Each nation has its peculiar gifts to humanity. Mankind can progress only as it takes advantage of the gifts of others and as it makes its contributions to others. The same thing is, of course, true of individuals. No man liveth unto himself alone. The boast that we sometimes hear that a man is a self-made man, is, as we all know, a very idle boast. It leaves out of consideration the fact that is becoming more and more apparent with the development of psychological and sociological knowledge, that every man is to a very great degree the result of the environment in which he is placed, and the habits which are learned as responses to that environment. It is this fact that offers us the suggestion for a modern substitute for the ancient dogma of God. If it is true that environment plays so important a part in our lives, then it is apparent that if man is to be all that he may be and should be the environment in which he lives his life must be an environment favorable to the development of his personality as an individual and as a contributor to the common good.

We would substitute for the personal God of Christianity no high-sounding, empty poetical imagery. You cannot pray to a figure of speech. You can sing about the old Ocean, but you cannot pray to the ocean. Try it. Go out in a small boat in the mid-Atlantic when the storms are raging overhead and the sea is rolling in a wild confusion. There, in the midst of all that mad roar and rush of waters, open your heart in prayer to Father Neptune to save your frail bark from destruction. You will find no voice that speaks to the waters, "Peace, be still." There is but one way to conquer those angry waters, and that is an appeal to science to invent a ship that will ride the waves.

Nor would we call in philosophy to formulate for us an involved phrase such as Professor Whitehead's "Principle of Concretion," to which other philosophers like Professor Wieman must devote chapter after chapter of explanation before the idea emerges out of confusion. Religion is for poets and philosophers, but it is not for them alone. When ideas of God need to be expressed in language which only philosophers can understand, and which when understood leave God just about where he was before the explanation was attempted, little has been gained for the non-philosophical mind, whatever may have been attained of satisfaction to the philosophers. A quotation from John Dewey is particularly apt in this place.

> Philosophy recovers itself when it ceases to be a device for dealing with the problems of philosophy, and becomes a method, cultivated by philosophers, for dealing with the problems of men.

Our attempt here is to do just what Professor Dewey speaks of. The problem of God is one of the problems of men. We would not take away the personal God who hears and answers prayer and substitute either poetical fancies or philosophical principles to which only a man bereft of his sanity would think of praying. We would suggest a god who could answer prayer, a god to whom every man, poet, philosopher, or ditch-digger may present his petition with an assurance of a sympathetic hearing. And that god — though we would not call it by that misleading name — is a sympathetic society, a society so organized as to be helpful to every individual, a society that would bend to the helpless and that would put the wealth of its resources beneath him to raise him from pain and want and inspire him to become a strong man among strong men.

The cry of the helpless today ascends to the heavens where instead of a tender, loving Father about whom Christianity has preached, it finds myriads of dead and dying stars. Real religion would substitute for that deity, a true source of help for those in need.

Before closing this chapter let us consider briefly the effect of the present, orthodox idea of God on the believers. It is not necessary to discuss this thought at length because the matter has been adequately dealt with by others. We speak of it only for the sake of comparison. Dependence upon a supernatural god breeds in man a weakness in attacking life's problems. Like the dogma of immortality, it turns man's attention away from life here and now to life elsewhere. It prevents the development of self-reliance. People are often heard to say that "God helps those who help themselves," but this has been looked at with ill-favor by the clergy. It has the twang of heresy, and Christian leaders prefer to sing —

Nothing in my hands I bring,
Only to thy cross I cling.

The church has always striven to show the uselessness, if not the downright sinfulness, of trying to help one's self. "Cast thy burden on the Lord" represents the true attitude of the Christian from the days of St. Paul to the days of our modern

Christian apostles. " Faith without works is dead " is a perfectly good biblical quotation, but whenever it has been employed it has been used to increase the collections for foreign missions, or " works " have been interpreted to mean attendance at church services, giving alms to the poor, teaching in the Sunday school, or performing some other distinctively churchly service. Nothing could be ranker heresy than that a man speak of saving himself.

The weakness in attacking life's problems does not grow out of the sense of dependence. It comes from dependence upon a god who is jealous of his prerogative as saviour. What would become of the whole Christian scheme of salvation through the blood of Jesus if men were allowed to think of themselves as their own saviours? Obviously, the function of the clergyman as priest would be seriously challenged by such an attitude.

This attitude of glorifying God and depending upon " faith " rather than upon " works " for our salvation, has led to a complete separation of churchly affairs from ordinary affairs of life. The very architecture of our churchly edifices inspires an aloofness from life. We go to church to escape life, and if the preacher — and he would be a rare preacher indeed — should attack in any definite manner the problems of life, we register our protests against mixing religion with politics or business. The inevitable consequence is that the contrasts in society have become greater and greater, and the problems of our industrial world have grown constantly more difficult of solution.

Let us now compare the effects of dependence upon a supernatural god with the dependence upon a sympathetic society. We shall not elaborate the point that in the one case we find a dependence upon an unproved and vague source of assistance while in the other we have a dependence upon a real source of help. Man has always created his gods, but they have hitherto been created out of the non-tangibles. Gods have always been invisible. The time has come to create a visible, knowable god. We shall not dwell on that point, but rather let us ask: Would not man be just as weak in the attitude of dependence upon a sympathetic society as in the attitude of dependence upon a supernatural deity? Is it not, after all, the sense of dependence that ought to be attacked rather than the idea of the orthodox God? That there is a great deal that can be said against the attitude of dependence cannot be denied. The writer joins those who are endeavoring to free the child from too much parental supervision. He cannot, however, agree that the child should be taken away from its parents at birth, or at any time. In a previous chapter he has chosen the other road, that of educating the parents to be fit to care for the child. Nor would the separation of a child from its parents assure the development of an independent attitude in the child. That the child would not, in that case, feel dependent upon its parents is, obviously, true; but it would still feel a sense of dependence upon someone else. Nature has provided that the human child be dependent upon someone for many years. Since that is true, there seems to be no good reason why that someone should not be its father and mother. But, to return to the original question, is not the sense of dependence upon society just as fruitful of evil effects as the sense of dependence upon God? I believe there is a great distinction that is overlooked in asking such a question. When we depend upon God, nothing further is required except faith that he will take care of us. This attitude is clearly expressed in the song made popular by the "Billy" Sunday meetings.

Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you.
Beneath his wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.

God will take care of you
Through every day, o'er all the way,
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you.

If repetition could alone insure belief, we should all be convinced by this rhymester's jingle. We are not a part of God. We are children of God. He is quite independent of us. He makes up his own mind. He reigns supreme, and we accept his decisions joyously if they are in accord with our wishes, resignedly if they are not, in which case we lugubriously explain that "it was not so to be," and thus line ourselves up with the fatalists.

On the other hand, we are a part of society. We can help to make up the mind of society. What society is, we are in part responsible for. If society is to become sympathetic instead of unjust and cruel, each man must turn away from a narrow view of life to the broader view which makes every man his brother. To depend upon a society so reorganized would be, in a sense, to depend upon one's self. Let us assume that such a society were in existence at this moment. Let us also assume that you and I were among the unemployed. Instead of walking the streets, seeking work of any sort whatsoever, meeting rebuff and discouragement on all sides, and ultimately returning home to face the questioning gaze of a despairing wife and hungry children, we might go to the agencies of such a society and be placed in a position for which we had been prepared. That would be a real answer to prayer, and that sort of god would be a god worth having. In a very real sense we should be dependent upon that society, but that kind of dependence would not foster weakness.

It is that kind of society that real religion sees as the goal of its present effort, and it is the realization of that kind of a society that real religion accepts as its heaven.

## *II. Modern Substitutes for Ancient Forms*

PROBABLY no question has been more productive of debate than that which has centered about the church as an institution. At least as far back as the days of George Fox, the institution of the church was challenged. The Quaker changed the name from church to "society" and cut away all the ceremonies, but the very absence of ritual has come to be as much a liturgy in a Quaker meeting as the elevation of the Host is in a cathedral or the reading of the Torah in a synagogue.

It is inevitable that in such a discussion as we have entered into, this much labored question should come up once more. Whatever may be true as to Christianity, whether it is proving inadequate or not, and whatever may be the cause, whether the doctrines of Christianity are driving men out of the church or whether the automobile, the motion picture, and the radio have entered into a conspiracy to entice men away from the church, the fact is that the church is failing to hold its membership lists in a state that is commensurate with the increasing population. Notwithstanding the desperate efforts of ministers, elders, deacons, and other official members of the church to make the records agree with the actual facts, there are less and less people joining the church and more and more people leaving the church each year. Fundamentalists do not appear to be greatly harassed by this condition. They believe that "many are called but few are chosen." The many are leaving; the few remain. The Fundamentalist accepts this condition as ordained of God, and he refuses to be disturbed by it. To the Modernist, however, the facts revealed by the church mortality records are most discomfiting. He has been accustomed for so long a time to regard the success of the particular congregation as dependent upon numbers in membership and in dollars that the appalling decrease in membership during the last few years seems to bring him an acute distress.

Must we retain the church as an institution? It would seem that the only sane reply would be found in the answer to another question: Is the church a necessary institution? If it performs no necessary function, then, however serviceable it may have been in the past, it is obvious that it would be both ethically and economically wrong to continue to support it. Let us, therefore, inquire into the functions of the church and their necessity in our modern life.

The first of these functions, and perhaps that which would be given most prominence by the defenders of Christianity, is that of revealing God to man, and thus serving as the door to eternal happiness. There is no doubt that when the doctrines involved in this function were accepted universally among educated men as among the ignorant, a claim for the validity of this function might have been set up without criticism; but today, when an ever-increasing number of men are challenging these dogmas, when education is rapidly becoming universalized and men are thinking in terms of science rather than in terms of superstition, it is clear that this function of the church is disappearing.

The dogmas involved in this first function give rise to a second function, namely, that of evangelizing the world, that is, of making converts to these and other doctrines. Obviously, if the doctrines concerned are rejected, this second function is destroyed. It may be said here that whatever the doctrines of the church may be, whether those of orthodoxy or some others such as those advanced by secularists, it will be necessary to have some institution through which to propagate them, and that therefore, even if Christianity is inadequate, it does not follow that the church as an institution must be abandoned. To that question we shall have occasion to return later in the present chapter. In this brief paragraph we are thinking only of the church as it is today.

A third function of the church is that of serving as the cultural center of the community. There can be no doubt that in the past this has been one of the important functions of the church. A hundred years ago the minister was the most highly educated, in some cases the only educated, man in the community. Few people attended college. High schools were rare. Elementary education was poorly administered. The rigorous life of the times required that boys be taken early from school in order that they might be placed in the field to work side by side with their fathers, and it was not thought necessary that girls be educated. All these conditions placed a premium on education. Parents were habituated to select the strong, vigorous boys for the plow, and the weaker boys for the pulpit. These weaker boys were sent to college. They returned to their own or other communities possessed of what went for education in those days. To these college men the people of the community went for the intellectual stimulation which they had missed. This condition no longer prevails. The educational status of the minister has sunk far below that of other college trained men. The nature of the training which he receives in the great majority of the theological seminaries is such that it deprives him of the broad view of life that other training confers. The preacher, as a consequence, is no longer sought for for information and intellectual stimulation.

Another element in the cultural value of the church of the past was its musical program. The church was the one place in the community where people could hear music. Every Sunday, therefore, those who loved music went to church. There they could hear the choir sing and there they could listen to the music that came from the organ while the collection was being lifted. Nowhere else in the community could they indulge their love for and appreciation of music. Today, there is abundant opportunity to hear the best music, both instrumental and vocal, without entering the church doors, indeed the best music is not heard in the churches. It is rather to the concert hall and opera house that we go when we wish to listen to the best talent in the musical world. And if we do not care to leave our homes, we may "tune in" on our radios and hear the best that the world affords.

That which has occurred in the musical world has also taken place in the realm of architecture. Fifty years ago the best examples of the architectural art were to be found in ecclesiastical structures. This is rapidly changing. Churches today are not following medieval customs in the design of their buildings. They have yielded to the commercial spirit and are building great apartment houses or business offices, housing their church auditoriums in some out-of-the-way corner where they will not interfere with the business arrangements made with the great financial interests which undertake the subsidizing of the apartment house, hotel, or business office, as the case may be. Very naturally the architectural design of the structure changes with the altered aim.

Aside from all this, Christianity is regarded by a few modern spirits as merely an institution which encourages the æsthetic spirit. In a recent book, John Cowper Powys, a mystic of a very different kind from the religious mystics with whom we have long been familiar, sets up a theory of Christianity which enables an intelligent man to continue to be a Christian without doing great violence to his intellect. Powys, as we have said before, regards the dogmas of Christianity as æsthetical rather than as historical truth. In other words, the doctrines and ceremonies of the church are bits of poetry. Such a view would be fraught with little danger if all people were able to recognize, as Powys does, that Christianity is a mass of superstitions or myths. Treated as a beautiful poem, the Genesis story and the Story of the Virgin Birth, as well as the exquisite piece of fiction known as the Resurrection of Christ, would not be objectionable. But there is a very obvious peril in this course. We have called attention to it in the previous chapter. If these stories are poetry, then only poets are safe, for the non-musical mind which accepts them as literal, historical truth is misled and, therefore, intellectually and spiritually defeated.

Modernist clergymen seem to derive a great deal of satisfaction in poking fun at us for criticizing them for believing the Creation story. " Why," retorts the Modernist, " don't you know that we think of that story as poetry? You are a little late, sir, for we have regarded that story as poetry for a long time. Read some of our literature on the subject, and you will not make so egregious an error."

There is poetry and *poetry*. There is the beautiful poetry of pure imagination, and there is historical poetry. If the Modernist means the former, we have no argument with him save that this interpretation is not understood by the man with a non-poetical mind. Would the Modernist join Powys in holding that these poems are mythological, that they merely express the superstitions of an earlier people and hold no historical value whatsoever? It may be doubted that the Modernist is willing to make this statement. It is rather the latter kind of poetry that he has in mind when he asserts that he accepts the story of Creation as poetry, and in that case he has resorted to that which is scarcely distinguishable from subterfuge or evasion. Of course, those who are at all familiar with the Oriental mode of expression know that that mode is poetical. That which we of the West state very bluntly in prose, the Eastern writer expresses in poetry; but it is a great mistake to think that the foundation of such poetry is sheer imagination. The Creation story is poetry, certainly, but it is something else; it is the early writer's idea of what actually took place, poetically expressed. So that when the Modernist says that he accepts the Genesis story as poetry, he is guilty — perhaps unintentionally — of speaking ambiguously. What does he mean? That the story is based on nothing historical? that it is solely a delightful work of the imagination? or, does he mean that it is, as we have said, the science of the early writer poetically expressed? If he means this, and we do not see how he can consistently mean anything else, our complaint is justified, and he is really laughing at himself when he turns the banality of his sarcasm upon us. So far as the present writer's opinion is concerned, he believes that the story in Genesis and many other stories in the Bible, Old Testament and New Testament, are the poetical expressions of that which the writers believed actually to have occurred. If this is true, the Modernist must do something more than declare that he accepts them as poetry. He must frankly say that they are myths arising out of the superstitions held by very ancient peoples, and that they hold no meaning for us other than that which we attach to the beautiful wherever we find it.

But assuming that this view is acceptable, namely, that Christianity is purely mythical and poetical, is it necessary that such an institution as the church be maintained to foster the worship of the beautiful? That it was necessary in the older day will not be denied; but with all our facilities for the worship of the beautiful, with our magnificent museums where the highest artistic expressions and achievements are to be seen, with our concert halls where the finest musical talent is to be heard, with the movietone and the radio bringing music of all kinds within reach of the public, it may be doubted whether the church needs to be continued as the center of cultural life. Indeed, it is scarcely debatable that these agencies are better fitted than the church to bring culture to the people.

A fourth function of the church has been its place as the social center of the community. Again, it is necessary to compare the general condition of affairs today with that which existed fifty years ago. A half century ago there were few opportunities in any community in the country to meet one's fellows except those opportunities which were offered by the church. It was at the services, "socials," festivals, and camp-meetings of the church that people got together. At other times they were widely scattered throughout the countryside. Farms were large and farmers were busily engaged in forcing from a reluctant soil the means of livelihood. On Sundays they laid away their implements of daily toil, donned their best clothes, and gathered together at the church. Perhaps their chief reason for attending the service was not to hear the preacher preach or the choir sing, but to come into contact with one another. Today, with our highly urbanized society, it is no longer necessary that men do this. Various groups furnish the outlet which was formerly sought in the church. The function of the church as a social center has been displaced by other institutions. Men meet in their lodges, clubs, rotary societies, chambers of commerce, and schools, and find in these groups the satisfaction for the gregarious instinct.

It is necessary, perhaps, to mention briefly one other function of the church, namely, that of educating the children in morals. This function the older church performed, or sought to perform, through the medium of the Sunday school. No one will deny that the work was very poorly done. Those usually depended on for instruction were untrained in the art and science of teaching, and were not infrequently uneducated, aged women who were willing to be teachers. It was always a difficult task to secure the services of even these people in this capacity. Younger people could not be induced to undertake it. Those chosen, therefore, were old women who knew little about the child mind and who possessed no ability for the task. Sunday school meant the learning of "golden texts," saying the Lord's Prayer, and singing a few hymns that were cut down for children's uses. The meetings were generally presided over by some more or less effeminate bachelor who discovered the satisfaction of his parental urge by his contact with other people's children, and who enjoyed the eminence which the position gave him in the community. Occasionally a capable man was secured for the work, the principal of the local public school, for example, and then the minister knew that trouble would soon be brewing, since the new Sunday-school superintendent would try to introduce new methods and thus offend the "pillars of the church." Sometimes the new superintendent would try to obtain the services of trained teachers, and then pandemonium broke loose. The elders held up their hands in amazement at the conduct of the superintendent. They claimed that his innovations were distasteful if not actually heretical. Soon the capable man threw up the job in disgust, and everything sank back into its former state.

The church as educator was not in much better condition from the point of view of adult education. The preacher, however learned he might be, did not demonstrate very great ability as a teacher. He could repeat texts from the Bible, and if he repeated them often enough, the people would be able to repeat them after him parrot like; but so far as giving any valuable instruction was concerned, there was little of worth in the pulpit ministrations. The fact is, as all educators know, that mere preaching at people does not constitute teaching. An address, however intellectual and delightful it may be, does not become translated into the habits of the people. It is only when the various situations in which the people find themselves in their daily life are treated and illustrated that any real teaching has been accomplished; and the preacher was not able to enter into these situations because his manner of life shut him out from the temptations to which his parishioners were continuously subjected.

But we are not deeply concerned with what the church *was*. It is with the present condition of the church that we are dealing, and with the agencies which are existing side by side with the church. Education, even the education in morals, has been taken out of the hands of the church and has been placed in the hands of secular agencies such as the college, the school, and the multifarious institutions of adult education. Whatever else the church may be regarded as doing today, it cannot be properly said to be serving as an educator. Here and there we find a few liberal ministers who give to the pulpit a didactic function, but for the most part, the present-day ministry is content to allow the pulpit to be priestly rather than prophetic in its attitude.

We have mentioned five functions of the church — (1) the church as the revealer of God to men and as the way to heavenly bliss, (2) the church as the evangelizer of the world, (3) the church as the cultural center of the community, (4) the church as the social center of community life, and (5) the church as an educator — and we see that in each of these functions save the first two the church has relinquished its position to other agencies of a secular kind which are better able to perform the functions than itself. The functions which other agencies do not attempt are the first two. Whether they do not attempt them because they regard these functions as inessential in modern society, or whether they refrain from assuming them because they are distinctively the province of the church, may be open to question, but the fact is that no agency save the church attempts them. The only question which may interest us here is whether the enormous expense of maintaining an institution which has only these two functions is justified in a time when vast amounts of money are needed to attain greater efficiency in those institutions of whose necessity there is no doubt. If real religion is applied to this situation and we look at the church from the point of view of the scientific attitude, it would seem inescapable that we should abolish an institution whose sole aim and function involve matters that are so problematical both as to their validity and as to their service to mankind.

But if we abolish the church, what, we are asked, shall we substitute in its place? And we answer: if the church is unnecessary, why should we substitute anything in its place? To say that a substitute is necessary is to admit that the church is performing a genuine service, and that, a study of society today shows to be false. However necessary the church may have been in the past, today it serves no real purpose. It continues to send its missionaries to foreign countries where they are neither wanted nor needed. It continues to do a work at home which is essential neither to our welfare nor to our progress. It continues to be a hindrance to rather than a promoter of human happiness. It continues to offer an escape from the vital problems of society by presenting a purely individualistic salvation instead of recognizing the fact that man's salvation is a task that he must work out in coöperation with his fellows. It continues to point to sin as a purely individual matter from which man can be saved not by his own efforts but by the grace of God, and it utterly neglects to observe sin as social unrighteousness from which man can be saved only by his own collective efforts. Why should we offer any substitute for the church?

However, in the foregoing pages we have already answered the question of suggesting substitutes for the church. Organized charity has displaced the alms-giving of the church. Clubs and societies of various kinds have displaced the social functions of the church. Schools and institutes of adult education have displaced the educational function of the church. Museums, art exhibits, concert halls, the theatre, the opera, the motion picture, and the radio have displaced the cultural functions of the church. Psychiatric clinics have displaced the personal advisory functions of the church. Changed scientific and psychological attitudes have displaced the doctrinal functions of the church. All these are substitutes which we would offer, and which when offered, seem to leave but small space for the church to move about in. The fact is that the church today is struggling to discover for itself a true excuse for its existence. Its paid workers are naturally unwilling to admit their own dispensability. They are loath to relinquish positions of prominence and lucrativeness. The majority of them remain unconscious of the ambiguity of their position; but the more conscientious and alert among them have a growing feeling of uselessness and parasitism. This sense of discomfort communicates itself to others with the result that more and more young men of native ability and intellectual attainment refuse to enter the ministerial profession, while those who find themselves caught in the toils either voluntarily give up the desire to be intellectually honest and consign themselves to the inevitable mental degeneration necessitated by the ministerial position, or casting discretion aside, forge ahead toward mental liberation, hoping almost against hope that changing times will save them from destruction.

If our conclusions as to the nature of religion are correct, if religion has to do with the affairs of this present life, its problems, its complexities, its possibilities, if religion consists in developing the good life in man as a worker, a player, a thinker, and a governor of his own conduct, then it seems obvious that the ministers of tomorrow will be those who intimately mingle in human activities. In other words, the minister will be the man who ministers, who serves humanity. Madame Curie is one of the great ministers of the modern world. Ramsay MacDonald is another. Thomas A. Edison is another. Charles Lindbergh, John Dewey and Albert Einstein are still others. The business man, the artist, the actor, the professor, the engineer, the economist, the sociologist, the psychiatrist, the physicist, the biologist — these are the ministers of our modern age. Their congregations are the millions who depend upon their services. The directors' room, the laboratory, the stage, the clinic, the classroom — these are the pulpits from which are delivered great sermons that stir the world as the world has never been stirred before. These are the men who are busy saving the world from injustice and oppression, and bringing in enlightenment and freedom and human happiness. LaFayette is reported to have declared, " The world is my country! " In similar spirit, modern man may exclaim, " The world is my church, and he who invests his life in an effort to make the world a happier world, is my minister."

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